
* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
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* Issue 11 -- November 1993 Editor: Bruce Long *
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What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

"Hollywood Mysteries"--Shredded

As stated in TAYLOROLOGY 4, most published recaps of the Taylor murder case (in newspapers, magazines, books, and "crime encyclopedias") are filled with errors and inaccuracies. The following is a recent typical example.

HOLLYWOOD MYSTERIES is a small book published by Globe Publishing in 1989, containing a short 5-page recap of the Taylor case. Included in just those five pages are various unsubstantiated (and probably false) rumors:

that Taylor was a "notorious womanizer," that Mary Miles Minter "and her mother had been taking turns in Taylor's bed," that "an autographed pair of Mary's panties was found by police in Taylor's closet," that Taylor "had opium and cocaine habits," that Taylor had "a closet full of bras and lingerie," that "police found pornographic photographs of Taylor posing with some of the biggest female stars in Hollywood," that Charlotte Shelby "was also known to spend a night or two over at Taylor's bungalow," etc. Rational arguments can be presented against all of those unverified rumors.

But rumors aside, that recap in HOLLYWOOD MYSTERIES includes many "facts" which are certainly absolutely false:

It is stated that Taylor was the president of the Screen Director's Guild. FACT: Taylor was president of the Los Angeles branch of the Motion Picture Director's Association (MPDA), an entirely different organization. The Screen Director's Guild would not be founded until the 1930s. The MPDA was not a union, unlike the Screen Director's Guild, and the MPDA had a separate New York branch, with separate officers. At the time of Taylor's death, J. Searle Dawley was president of the New York branch.

It is stated that Taylor was shot twice through the heart.

FACT: The coroner's report indicates that he was shot just once, in the left side, the bullet puncturing his left lung, but not his heart.

It is stated that Taylor's body was found with "a chair draped over his legs."

FACT: A wooden chair was astride one leg, but it was not overturned.

It is stated that Edna Purviance telephoned Charlotte Shelby and told her Taylor had been killed.

FACT: Purviance did not telephone Shelby; Shelby learned of Taylor's death from Carl Stockdale. (Edna Purviance telephoned Mabel Normand; Normand telephoned her director Dick Jones on the Sennett lot; word spread throughout

the Sennett lot and reached Stockdale who was acting in a picture there; Stockdale called Shelby.)

It is stated that Charlotte Shelby called Charles Eyton and notified him that Taylor had been killed.

FACT: Shelby did not notify Eyton. As Eyton testified at the inquest, he had been telephoned and notified by Harry Fellows, Taylor's assistant director.

It is stated that Mabel Normand and Adolph Zukor were at Taylor's bungalow on the morning the body was found.

FACT: Mabel Normand did not return to Taylor's bungalow until three days after the murder; Adolph Zukor was in New York at the time and did not come to Los Angeles until more than a week after the murder.

It is stated that Charles Eyton arrived at the bungalow prior to the arrival of the police.

FACT: As testimony at the inquest indicates, policemen Ziegler and Parsons were already on the scene before Eyton arrived there.

It is stated that the police were not notified of Taylor's death until an hour or so after the body had been discovered.

FACT: The police were notified a few minutes after the body was found; Peavey discovered Taylor's body at 7:30 and the police arrived before 8:00.

It is stated that when the police arrived, Zukor and Eyton were burning Taylor's personal papers in his fireplace.

FACT: Taylor's bungalow had no fireplace.

It is stated that Mary Miles Minter was one of the chief suspects in Taylor's murder.

FACT: The police never suspected Minter of having murdered Taylor.

It is stated that Minter attended Taylor's funeral, approached the casket, and started screaming that the corpse had spoken to her.

FACT: Minter did not attend Taylor's funeral; she went into seclusion a few days after the murder and did not emerge in public for over a month. At the same time the funeral was in progress, she was making an official statement to William Doran of the district attorney's office. The "talking corpse" episode took place several days prior to the funeral, and she did not start screaming (see below).

It is stated that Mary Miles Minter spent several hours in Taylor's bungalow on the day of the murder, prior to Mabel Normand's visit.

FACT: Minter certainly did not visit Taylor's bungalow that day prior to Mabel Normand. If Minter did visit Taylor's bungalow after Normand, it was only for a few minutes.

It is stated that Mabel Normand visited Taylor for several hours on the day of the murder.

FACT: Her visit only lasted about 45 minutes, from 7:00 to 7:45 p.m.

It is stated that police wanted to investigate Shelby but that she "bolted to Europe."

FACT: Shelby did not go to Europe until mid-1926, more than four years after the murder.

It is stated that Zelda Crosby was "a Taylor lover who killed herself because of his infidelities."

FACT: Zelda Crosby committed suicide in New York; Taylor worked in Los Angeles. It is very doubtful that Taylor and Crosby even knew each other.

The Taylor case is one of the most fascinating murder cases in American history. It is regrettable that most of the material written about the case has focused on spreading silly rumors and misinformation, rather than delving

into the real facts of the case.

"The Humor of a Hollywood Murder", Part 8

Confessions, Confessions

February 16, 1922

NEW YORK HERALD

(Los Angeles)--No end of letters from cranks are pouring into the investigative offices. Police Captain Adams says it beats anything in his nineteen years' experience. He has time to read only a few of them. One writes from Oregon that he did it, and adds, "I am leaving Portland tonight, but whether north, south, east or west I don't say. Come and find me."

All these letters are being studied on the chance that one of them might yield pay dirt, but thus far they have proved merely vexations and time wasting.

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February 27, 1922

ST LOUIS STAR

The district attorney of Los Angeles will have to have some rejection slips printed soon to use in returning confessions in the Taylor case.

* * * * *

March 7, 1922

TULSA TRIBUNE

Why can't all those persons who have confessed to the Taylor murder get together and draw straws to determine who's going to be "it"?

* * * * *

March 7, 1922

DES MOINES TRIBUNE

Los Angeles sleuths report that they have had over a hundred letters

"confessing" the murder of Movie Director Taylor. And no doubt most of the writers are peeved because their letters didn't even get into the newspapers.

March 8, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

Curdled Brains

More than 300 different persons have written to the Los Angeles police "confessing" to the murder of William Taylor. This means that there are at least 300 weak-minded individuals in the country. One can hardly think of a feebler brain than the one that spends time and trouble to pretend the conception of a crime it knows nothing of except through the papers.

But, after all, this is nothing to the exhibition of mental debility we would have if Taylor's murderer were behind the bars. The unsolved mystery of the crime has brought forward only one type of imbeciles. Another and far larger class would be produced by the capture of the criminal.

Were his address known at some prominent jail thirty times 300 addlepates would proclaim themselves by sending him flowers, writing him scented notes full of silly slush, and trying to call on him in order to bring their morbid sentimentality into contact with his aura of iniquity.

No, the Taylor mystery has by no means revealed all the whey wits in the country. The possibilities are not at all exhausted in the count of 300. And from that point of view we have really been lucky that the murderer has not been caught.

March 7, 1922

LOUISVILLE TIMES

If there were a conspiracy to destroy public interest in the solution of the mystery surrounding the murder of William Desmond Taylor, it could not find more effective means than to present a confession a day from here, there and somewhere else. The public interest is certain to grow less as the numerous admissions of guilt prove to be false.

March 8, 1922

LOUISVILLE COURIER-JOURNAL

Hang Them All

Never a day passes that does not bring new confessions of the murder of Taylor, the Hollywood moving picture director.

A Los Angeles dispatch says that more than 300 persons in the United States, with one in England and one in France, have now "confessed" they killed Taylor, though with one exception none of them has signed his name to the confession.

Would it not be well to take these persons at their word? Would it not be more than worth while for the detectives to run down these 300 confessed murderers, round them up at some central spot and hang the whole bunch?

They have confessed that they deserve hanging; their actions prove it; and they ought to get their deserts.

* * * * *

March 12, 1922

OAKLAND TRIBUNE

In the frost-bitten states of the East more than three hundred persons have confessed that they murdered Taylor. There can be but one reason and it is strange Los Angeles has not realized the significance. What those three hundred persons wish is the chance to be warmed on the famous Los Angeles police grill.

Poetry Potpourri

February 5, 1922

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Mabel sat in her gasoline hack,
Eating peanuts by the sack;
She heard a shot but would not go,
Because she loved the peanuts so.

* * * * *

February 6, 1922

CHICAGO POST

"Mother, mother, may I go in the movies?"
"Oh, yes, my darling daughter;
But remember you were just a friend of his,
In each case of manslaughter."

* * * * *

February 7, 1922

ALBUQUERQUE HERALD

Behind the Silver Screen
In Movie-Land;
There earnest workers glean
With heart and hand
The brave rewards that come to those who serve
Art's stern demands; and will not swerve
Their cold allegiance by a curl or curve.
In Movie-Land
Enamoured votaries of Art
In Movie-Land
They live aloof, apart:
Ambition grand
Bids them spurn dull conventions gray,
And live those parts, both grave and gay,
For which we mortals yearn and pay
This Movie-Land.
Nor can man's silly laws,
In Movie-Land
Cause eager Art to pause
In its demand
For that full freedom which permits
Strong spirits to flow freely; nimble wits

To play at will, while Cupid flits
Through Movie-Land.
What though these spirits free
In Movie-Land
Should seem to you and me,
From where we stand
To be a trifle more free than they should
With Freud and cocktails, guns and blood?
Why should that call the cops to Hollywood
In Movie-Land?
What know we of the Urge
In Movie-Land
That moves these souls to surge
At Art's command
Until in inspiration's noble rage
They crowd all other news clear off the stage
And grab each day the whole front page
For Movie-Land!

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February 11, 1922
OKLAHOMA CITY TIMES

Now Mary Miles Minter is striving to paint
Her love as a beautiful flower,
Though readers are certain enough that it ain't
Though Mary insists by the hour.

* * * * *

February 12, 1922
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

My mother was a lady, sire,
Though she lived in Hollywood;
But how she ever got that way,
I've never understood.

* * * * *

February 12, 1922

OMAHA BEE

Hollywood

All Hollywood is but a stage,
The movie actors are the players,
Where comedy is all the rage
And they of fun the wild purveyors--
On with the dance, let joy prevail,
Let no gloom-spreader in to dim it,
Their wish is law, they have the kale, [1]
They own the town and go the limit.
Be careful if you can't be good,
They say, as from the dance they're wending
Yet comedy at Hollywood
Oft' seems to have a tragic ending.
And yet while Hollywood's a lot
Where movie folk cut up their capers,
The public doesn't get the plot
Until they read it in the papers.

* * * * *

February 12, 1922

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Screen Land, Scream Land,
I simply can't allude
To what they did; 'twas everything
But what they really should.
Only were they decent
On days when the weather was good;
They'd do a nice, clean murder, out
In dear old Hollywood. [2]

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February 13, 1922

CHICAGO POST

Reflections

Oh, Hollywood the Golden!
With youth and beauty blest;
Where every night holds revels,
Where no one goes to rest.
Where gents throw soup at waiters,
Where baby vamps write slush,
Where ladies by the dozen
Pursue one lonely mush!
A pleasant thought to harbor
As we chronicle these ills,
That for all this midnight splendor
The dear public pays the bills.

* * * * *

February 16, 1922

PITTSBURGH POST

Stern Resolve of a Moral Young Man

I'll never be a movie star
Though ten directors trail me;
In Hollywood, the chances are,
They'd either shoot or jail me.
Those horrid habit-forming drugs!
Those vamps, so blond and frisky!
I'm safer here among the thugs,
A-drinking moonshine whisky.

* * * * *

February 20, 1922

SEATTLE UNION-RECORD

A cute little miss known as Minter
At foxy old guys was a squinter.

An ill-advised wink
Brought her close to the brink--
Now she's in for the rest of the winter.

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February 22, 1922
LOUISVILLE TIMES

There's something wrong at Hollywood,
The cause, O let us seek!
There's something wrong at Hollywood--
No scandal yet this week.

* * * * *

March 6, 1922
SEATTLE UNION-RECORD

The Taylor Case

I've followed up the Taylor case
Till I am purple in the face,
And still I'm all at sea;
The sleuths ignores his bed and feed
To find the crook who did the deed,
But still it's mystery.
Each day detectives scent a clue,
That in a moment busts in two,
Like toy balloons, egad;
And all the science that they know
So far has failed to snare the bo
So crim-i-nally bad.
I'm sure that Sherlock Holmes would solve
The puzzle of the shot revolv,
And ferret out the crook,
If it were not the painful truth
That all the logic of this sleuth
Just came from out a book!

* * * * *

February 21, 1922

Roy Moulton

NEW YORK MAIL

They have found a drug, forsooth,
That will make you tell the truth.
There's a chance to test it good
Right now out in Hollywood.

The Public Speaks

February 10, 1922

NEW YORK NEWS

The Inquiring Photographer

THE QUESTION.

Do you think a man or a woman murdered Taylor?

THE ANSWERS.

C. A. Cruise, cotton broker: "I think a woman murdered him. My experience and observations have shown me that a woman will do anything for revenge when she thinks she has been jilted. Some woman probably was insanely jealous."

Mrs. E. W. Cunningham, housewife: "A man shot him. I base my opinion on the manner in which Taylor was murdered. It was so cleverly concealed that it must be the work of some man. A woman isn't so clever in such affairs."

Arthur Schwartz, college student: "I think a man did the shooting, because a woman would never shoot a man in the back. She is too eager to see the expression of pain. And she feels that a jury will exonerate her anyway."

Mrs. Tessie Saeger, housewife: "My intuition tells me that a woman fired the fatal shot. He had so many affairs that one of the women was bound to 'get him in the long run.' Once a woman gives her all, it isn't so easy to get rid of her."

Dr. A. J. Lippman, dentist: "From the newspaper accounts it is impossible to form a definite opinion. Reporters now have a splendid opportunity to exercise their dramatic powers. But, of course, a woman was the cause."

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February 11, 1922

Ruth West

NEW YORK WORLD

(letter to the editor)

Why can't some of the money spent for booze reform and foreign missions be used to clean up Hollywood? Why isn't something done to stop the scandalous doings in that place? Why are these people allowed to have their own code of morals and law?

* * * * *

February 13, 1922

H. G. Meyer

OMAHA BEE

(letter to the editor)

No one takes pleasure in accusing a dead man, who cannot defend himself before earthly accusers; nevertheless, lovers of decency fail to understand why anyone should want to defend William D. Taylor, the latest murder victim, and describe him as an "hitherto highly respected citizen."

Enough has come to light to prove that if he enjoyed the respect of decent people, he was not worthy of it. Some may not be certain whether this is a case of a good man gone bad or a bad man found out. Usually character and habits are fully formed before middle age and it is not likely that this man Taylor was an exception. If he had always lived a clean, respectable life he would hardly have become the moral degenerate that his actions and mode of life, as now revealed, indicate.

Since it has become known that in their social life many of the leading stars are flagrant violators of the laws of God and man, living in vice and debauchery, it is time that respectable people should turn their backs upon

them and protect themselves from pollution.

All citizens should obey the laws, including the 18th Amendment, and when they refuse to do so, let them be punished.

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February 10, 1922

"Movie"

CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER

(letter to the editor)

Movie stars should be compelled to get certificates of ordinary good character before being permitted to appear on the screen.

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February 20, 1922

L. L. Child

BALTIMORE AMERICAN

(letter to the editor)

So much has been said of the Minter pictures being barred, that as one of her many admirers and a firm believer in her character, I would like to know the meaning of the words Christianity and Justice!

Mary Miles Minter is but a kid, despite her years before the public, and because of the unkindness of fate in throwing her into the way of a man more than twice her age and with much experience with women, because of a little gush note she is to be deprived of her livelihood. Instead of helping her regain her footing on the ladder of life, she is told to "Slide, Kelly, slide" strait to the devil; and if she doesn't go fast enough, they'll give her a boost down the chute. Then they'll go to church, singing "Hozanna," and praise God they are not as other men are, and for once they'll be right, for they are worse!

Personally, I believe she is as straight and clean as the majority that walk the streets today.

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February 15, 1922

"Regular Reader"

NEW ORLEANS ITEM

(letter to the editor)

Permit me to offer my humble protest against the uncalled for amount of publicity given the notorious doings of the movie stars. As the father of two daughters and a son, it causes me no little concern to know that my children are made conversant with the affairs of the demi-monde[3] through reading the newspapers. It is all well and good to say that such things are part of life, and that children should not be kept in ignorance, but the fact remains that such recitals as frequently appear regarding the picture people work injury upon the plastic mind of the young man or woman.

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February 22, 1922

R. D. Martin

LOUISVILLE COURIER-JOURNAL

(letter to the editor)

Hollywood, the moving picture center of California, ever present in the news of late by reason of the shocking scandals of its dollar chasing, money-grafting bunch, is enough to make a dog sick.

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February 19, 1922

C. B. Reed

BUFFALO EXPRESS

(letter to the editor)

Hollywood, it is apparent, can be relied upon to furnish quite regularly sufficient scandal to satisfy the most morbidly inclined of the readers of the daily press. What is the reason that a profession possessing so many possibilities for the betterment of mankind should degenerate to such a low estate morally?

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February 19, 1922

W. H. Brashear

LOUISVILLE COURIER-JOURNAL

(letter to the editor)

To what degree is the present abnormal prevalence of juvenile delinquency, together with the unusual "crime wave" in general, attributable directly and indirectly to the vicious scenario? There can be no reasonable doubt but what the movie screen, through its various forms of heroized criminality and its exaltation of the salacious vampistic heroine is no small factor as an influence for crime and immorality.

The revolting revelations of recent months of orgies indulged in by movie actors and actresses "high up" in the screen world would seem to indicate that these theatrical people are endeavoring to put in actual practice the logical significance of what they have indirectly preached through the screen. That they have descended personally to depravity is but a natural and inevitable consequence. For the purveyors of degradation naturally precede in infamy those whom they corrupt and are even the first to reach the limit of moral perdition.

Theatrical screendom must be purged of the serpent's trail which, if not over it all, is yet over much of it; it must be taken wholly out of the hands of the sordid producer who would barter for gold the morals and decency of the people; it must cease to order films made in Sodom, Gomorrah or Hollywood.

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February 23, 1922

"Fair Play"

OMAHA NEWS

(letter to the editor)

I have been amused reading the feeble defense of one of your correspondents relative to the so-called movie stars and their morals. The public is aware of the film folks' fun and are in need of no camouflaged explanations. What I cannot understand is why they persecute the unfortunate girl of the street and allow these legalized professionals to go scott free.

* * * * *

January 27, 1923

George Sloan

MOVIE WEEKLY

(letter to the editor)

Cut out the sloppy balderdash handed out by the press boys. Most movie fans are becoming very cynical concerning the powdered dimpled darlings who now "star" in the movies. A few have brains, but the raft of spineless sweeties whose press agents write their "Biographies," and who drive up to a "rendouvoo" eating peanuts and reading the Police Gazette, who hold forth as the Queens of Hop at night and second-class "America's Sweethearts" in the daytime--all of these and this the movie public is good and sick of.

Epilogue: August 1923

August 9, 1923

LOS ANGELES EXPRESS

Mother Calls Mary M. Minter

"If I should die before I wake, and it would mean your redemption, I would gladly go." With this prayer thought for her estranged daughter, Mary Miles Minter, famous motion picture actress, Mrs. Charlotte Shelby entered that dream world of unconsciousness that is next thing to death.

Mrs. Shelby underwent a major operation at Good Samaritan Hospital Tuesday morning of this week for abcesses of the liver and dangerous intestinal trouble.

Mary Miles Minter has talked a lot about "liberty" since she left her mother's home, and refused to return.

Death may help her attain that desired liberty, for Mrs. Shelby's vitality is so low that it is a question whether she recovers.

Letter after letter Mrs. Shelby has written to her "baby girl" imploring her to return.

"The vultures who have taken possession of your baser self will drag you down to oblivion," wrote Mrs. Shelby to her little "Juliette." (Mary's name

is Juliette O'Reilly.)

This typical mother lies today at death's door, and cares not whether she recovers. Life is not worth living if Mary is lost to her.

* * * * *

August 9, 1923

LOS ANGELES HERALD

"Has she come?"

Many times today Mrs. Charlotte Shelby roused herself on her bed of pain and asked the doctors and nurses that question, but each time they were forced to shake their heads negatively in sorrow, for her daughter, Mary Miles Minter, the film star, has not come to see her in the hospital. Miss Minter is in the Pasadena.

Lying at the point of death, with a presentiment that she will not recover, Mrs. Shelby has implored a reconciliation with her daughter, but her pleas have continued to fall on deaf ears.

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August 10, 1923

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Mary to Sue Her Mother

Mary Miles Minter is Irish. She admits it and she looked it yesterday afternoon. Her big blue eyes blazed with wrath, then filmed with tears as she told her side of the story of the dissension in her household which brought about the estrangement with her mother and sister to the breaking point.

"They never would let me be a girl, to have a girl's pleasures, to do the things that other girls would do," she said. "I was never even allowed to have for myself the little pleasures shown in roles I played in pictures. I never had a doll, except that I held one in the pictures. I never had one all of my own. I never had a chance to play tag, or hide-and-go-seek or have a kiddiecar. I was always petted and pampered, tutored and touted, made to believe I was something I was not, do things I did not want to do, say things I did not mean. From morning till night I had money, money, money, talked and preached to me. I have earned lots of it, fairly hate it and have none of it.

"Mother is sick, quite sick, but she is not critically ill and has never asked for me," said Mary. "I talked with her just last Saturday. She and my sister know just where I am, where I have been living, have my telephone number and could get me on a minute's notice. I have not disappeared, never ran away and never tried to. I just left to be alone, to get away from the constant argument, from the posing, the nagging, the humiliation of being told that I myself have never done anything, would not have anything, had it not been for the watchful eye of mother and Margaret, my older sister, three years older than I.

"When I was a baby, just 4 years old, they took me away from my home and my daddy. We went to New York and mother accepted a theatrical engagement. Soon afterward I was given a part and ever since that time mother's work has consisted of drawing my salary.

"I was treated like a child always. Told when to go to bed, when to get up, whom to meet and whom not to meet. The very people I was working with every day were not good enough for me to associate with. I must be gracious to this and to that person because they stood high socially and were wealthy.

"The power of money was drilled into me on every hand. Mother said, 'be powerful even if you have to walk across the graves of others to get it.' She has no sympathy for the misfortune of another. 'The survival of the fittest,' was her watchword.

"She is her own best press agent. She knows what to say to create sympathy for herself. My sister Margaret is a 'yes-girl.' It's 'yes mamma' this and 'yes mamma' that."

All of which are but a few of the things which Miss Minter said as she announced her intention to take legal steps to secure an accounting for more than \$1,000,000 which she asserts her mother has collected on motion picture contracts of the daughter. Formal notice of intention to bring suit has already been served, said both Miss Minter and her attorney.

The trouble in Mary's home is said to have started shortly after she became of age a few months ago. At that time Mary is said to have decided to assume control of her own money and live alone "if she felt so inclined."

Mrs. Shelby has always acted as the girl's guardian and objected to any change in the arrangements.

Miss Minter declares that she is capable of taking care of herself and of her own money.

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August 10, 1923
Los Angeles Express

Famed Film Star Called Tiny "Czar" in Money Squabble

Mary Miles Minter was pictured as a little "Czar" in the Shelby family in a statement made by Miss Margaret Shelby, her sister.

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August 10, 1923
LOS ANGELES HERALD

"Mother never has refused a settlement with Mary," said Margaret. "To begin with, money was never discussed in our home. We had the happiest home imaginable. My mother has done what she thought was best for Mary and myself. It is bewildering to us why Mary has taken this stand.

"It is unfortunate that Mary should make these charges just now when mother is so ill. We both love her dearly and no matter what Mary says, it will not change our attitude towards her. She can come home at any time and be received with open arms."

But Mary Miles Minter smiled knowingly when told of her mother's plea for a reconciliation from her bed of pain.

"My mother is not in danger of death," was her simple declaration. "It is only a ruse to get me to call off a lawsuit contemplated for the accounting of the salary I have earned.

"Yes, I know, mother and Margaret say they love me better than anything else in life, that I am the very life and breath of their existence.

"They should have said 'I have been' all of that. I was, for where would either of them be without the money I have made?

"I do not have any affection for my mother. Let the world condemn, if it will. Even a worm will turn in time--and I have turned. Not because she is my

mother. I want to love her, but she has driven me from her so far that there is no turning back.

"How can my mother expect me to love and obey her when I have seen the way she has treated her own mother for years--as a glorified servant girl at my mother's beck and call.

"Oh, yes I know mother and Margaret swear undying devotion to me. They should. I have been their meal ticket for years. If only they had made these protestations of love years ago, how different our lives might have been.

"It isn't so very long ago since I tried to cuddle up to mother. To kiss and fondle her. What did I get? Told to 'Don't be silly' or 'Don't make a nuisance of yourself,' in private, but patted for the benefit of the world at large in public. It made a good impression, you know.

"Perhaps love means more to me than it does to some young women my own age. I am 21, you know."

* * * * *

August 11, 1923
LOS ANGELES RECORD

Millionaire Mammy

Where's That Money o' Mine
The sensational New Mother Song,
as sung with great publicity by
(Mary Miles) MINTER & SHELBY (Charlotte)

MARY MILES MINTER:

"Mammy, where's the million that I gave you
When I was working on the Lasky lot?
You know that I have earned the family money
Ever since I was a tiny tot.
But now I'm past sixteen.
I'm going to use my bean,
So--unless I get the coin--I'll make it hot!
Oh, Mammy, right that wrong,
Please listen while I sing my song:

"Mammy! Mammy! You are worth a million to me!
Gimme! Gimme! Or I will sue--you will see!
When I had a job
 With Mister Paramount
You took my paycheck
 'Cause you thought I couldn't count:
NOW, MAMMY! GIMME!
You gotta give my million back to me!"

CHARLOTTE SHELBY:

"Mary, don't be cruel to your Mammy!
 Mother's always loved her little gal.
Ever since your baby days at acting
 Remember Mother's been a faithful pal!
 No matter what you say,
 Come, see your Ma today,
For she is helpless in the hospital!"
 Laughing at this moan
 Mary called her Mother on the Phone:
"Mammy! Mammy! You are worth a million to me!
Gimme! Gimme! Or I will sue--you will see!
You made me what I seem today,
 Just beautiful and dumb!
I'm tired of all the shushing,
 So I'm going to make things hum.
NOW, MAMMY! GIMME!
You gotta give my million back to me!"

* * * * *

August 11, 1923
LOS ANGELES HERALD

Asked concerning the refusal to occupy the apartment which her mother set aside for her in their new apartment house which Miss Minter says is rightfully hers, she said:

"No full grown girl of my age could possibly live there under the rules and regulations laid down by my mother.

"I was given to understand that I could live there but could have no motion picture people or writers call upon me. Also that I had to put my lights out at 10 o'clock and could have no music in the evening.

"I protested and told mother I could not live under those conditions and she said, 'Very well, then you won't live in my house until you do.'

"Now you know some of the things that have made me dislike my mother. You can't go on sowing the wind without reaping the whirlwind. That's what mother is getting from me. She taught me, bit by bit, to distrust her. I can't help it. I just can't!"

"Would you go back if your mother settled everything amicably with you in regard to freedom of conduct and money matters?" Miss Minter was asked.

"Go back?" The wide blue eyes flashed resentfully. "Not if I had to scrub floors first. I'm through. I'm going to live my own life."

* * * * *

August 12, 1923

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, mother of Mary Miles Minter, the film star, broke her silence yesterday and told her side of the controversy.

"Our home life lacks only Mary," Mrs. Shelby said. "Her apartment is out there. And in the part of the home occupied by ourselves--it only lacks the joy of Mary.

"In the patio are the things she loves--the birds in their swinging cages, the gold fish in the fountain, flowers everywhere--her tiny 'poms' waiting for her call. [4]

"Mary wants her freedom to do as she wills. I have lived to protect her from that freedom until her mind is disciplined; until she is able to make wise decisions in the important things of life. I have wanted to see her philosophy of life based on fundamentals that make for happiness and content, and when she has acquired these, then will she be entitled to the fortune she has earned."

Mrs. Shelby so far had recovered last night that she was taken to her home from the Good Samaritan Hospital.

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August 13, 1923

LOS ANGELES HERALD

Miss Minter has frequently said that she believes she is under constant surveillance and recently acquired an automatic pistol, which she keeps beneath her pillow in her room.

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August 14, 1923

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Minter-Taylor Betrothal Admitted

Admitting that she was engaged to William Desmond Taylor, noted film director, at the time of his death, Mary Miles Minter yesterday for the first time bared the details of her romance with the slain man.

"For more than a year and a half I have kept secret that which was the sweetest and holiest thing in my life--my love for William Taylor," she said.

"I loved Mr. Taylor the first moment I saw him. And today, nearly two years after his death, my love for him is stronger than ever.

"I knew but little of Mr. Taylor's past life, but I knew that he was an honorable gentleman in all the word implies. He was a man's man, yet withal a man of gentleness and kindness. He was cultured, but yet not immune to the human feelings of mankind.

"I cared not who or what he was, for when he put his arms around me and said, 'Mary, I love you,' I knew that he was the one man in the whole world for me. And when I think that if it had not been for the continual bitter opposition to our engagement I would have been his wife it is almost more than I can bear. No wonder I am bitter.

"My whole life was wrapped up in him. When I would come home from the studio I would dream of the home in which William Taylor and I would spend the balance of our lives.

"But, no, he was too old, I was told. He was not an old man. William--

possibly you think it strange that I called him William or Mr. Taylor, but I so worshipped him that I could not think of calling him Bill--used to tell me that he would not allow me to sacrifice myself on a man his age.

" 'I wonder if I am doing the right thing?' he would often ask me. 'You have brought me the greatest happiness of my life, but you have come at the time of the Setting Sun, while you are in the glory of youth.'

"But I would not have it so. I knew that the years I spent with him, no matter how short, would be the happiest of my life, and we often discussed the little home we were going to build up in the Hollywood Hills.

"Then came his death. It was like a bolt from a clear sky. I was simply stunned. With my soul starved for love by the life I had led at home, his tenderness and kindness seemed doubly sweet.

"It was at this time that all the pressure possible was brought to bear by those under whose influence I was at the time to see that my engagement with Mr. Taylor was kept secret.

"I mustn't talk; it would hurt my career; it was the same old story of hushing and shushing. The public must never know that I was engaged. I must be a little girl with golden curls. It would never do for the world to know that I was a human being instead of a doll-faced automaton."

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August 14, 1923
LOS ANGELES HERALD

Love Diary of Mary Minter is Bared

The silent leaves of Mary Miles Minter's love diary spoke today and told for the first time their heart-throbbing story of a tragic romance which has extended beyond the grave.

With the passion and pathos of a literary classic they voiced of the thrill and thralldom of the deep and enduring affection of the beautiful young motion picture star for a man more than twice her age.

The diary is bound in scarlet moire silk, as scarlet as the life-blood of William Desmond Taylor that stained the floor of his home on that memorable night he met death at the hands of an assassin, and in it Mary

Miles Minter has recorded the yearnings and longings for her lost love.

The first entry in the book was made two weeks after the death of Taylor.

"Oh, my beloved, where are you?" the heartbroken girl wrote.

Then she described her longing for the man whose arms would no longer embrace her.

"You were to have been mine. Had I known you were to have been taken from me no power on earth could have kept us apart."

It was night. In the distance music was playing. She recorded memories of happier times when music, which Taylor loved, had been a part of their lives. She told of her hours of anguish and bitter weeping for the man who was gone. "Where? I do not know, my beloved. But you are near, somewhere, of that I am certain. You could not leave me so utterly hopeless, alone and forlorn."

Nine days later she again makes an entry of her grief and loss in the little book. This time "Chummy," the dog Taylor gave her, was stolen. "They have even taken away what you have given me," she wrote. "How a dog can understand! Better than most humans."

Then in Honolulu, in June. Again the dancing throng of that playground of the Pacific recalled happier days with the man she had loved and lost. But she believed Taylor was not far away. She felt his presence and the little diary carried a message not of a hopeless death, but to one who had "gone away for a little time and would return again.

"It is night again, dearest, our time of peace and surcease from the stress of life that grows so weary at times. Morning will come all too soon: and with its coming will begin again the weary tasks of life. Life without you, dearest, is weary. Our love was like a great white star that burns its way across the heavens. They are dancing down below. I can see them from the window. The lovely gowns look like bright colored balloons against the dark background.

"Oh, Desmond, my love, where are you? Surely not so far away but that I will find you somehow, somewhere?"

It was June again, in California. A year has rolled by since the last entry in the little diary. But the heart-hungry girl is still seeking her lost one. She is a woman now and realizes more fully her loss.

"How long, my love, how long until you clasp me again in your dear arms?"

That is the love of Mary Miles Minter for William Desmond Taylor, who rests under the golden sunshine in "God's Acre," where sleep the dead of this and other generations.

August 15, 1923
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Mary Minter Story Stuns Mrs. Shelby

Prostrated by her daughter's revelation of her romance with William Desmond Taylor, Mrs. Charlotte Shelby has suffered a relapse.

When shown the story of her daughter's engagement and the culmination of her tragic romance, she read the article from beginning to end, only to reply;

"I can't talk; it is all too terrible. Please leave me alone in my sorrow and grief."

August 15, 1923
Mary Miles Minter
LOS ANGELES TIMES
August 14, 1923
LOS ANGELES HERALD

[The following is an edited combination of her own written account published in the TIMES, and an interview published in the HERALD.]

Mary Minter Bares Taylor Love Affair

It has happened! For months and months I have been hoping and praying that my differences with my mother might not bring up again the dreadful incidents of the murder of William Desmond Taylor. I have tried and tried to make no references to it in my statements concerning my effort to secure an

accounting from my mother, but newspaper reporter after newspaper reporter has hounded me day and night always with questions, questions, questions about Mr. Taylor. The Times is the only newspaper which has not done this and because of this fact I am now giving the first statement that I have ever given under my own name.

William Desmond Taylor came into my life when I was 17 years of age. He was the first man ever to call me Miss Minter.

"How do you do, Miss Minter?" he said to me when first we were introduced, and then he smiled.

Always before I had been called Mary and treated like a child by men and women alike, but Mr. Taylor called me "Miss Minter," which at that age, heart hungry as I was, made an instant impression. From that moment he fascinated me. I loved him the first time I saw him. "This is God," my heart sang when I looked into his face.

I know the world will think that a very immature age and a very foolish conclusion for one so young. But you must remember that while for the last three years of my life my mother has tried to keep me a "little girl" with curls down my back, she earlier had made me appear and act older than I was.

When I was 8 years old I was passed off for 16, twice my age, and dressed as a midget, with high heels and long skirts, so that I could play the stellar role of "The Littlest Rebel" at the Chicago Opera House. That was because the state law of Illinois prohibited children under 16 years of age from appearing as professional performers.

These things have an effect upon a child that all the training and coaching in the world cannot eliminate. When I went into the movies it was different. Then mother wished to undue all the training of maturity she had imposed upon me and have me appear unsophisticated and simple, childlike and trustful. It was paradoxical. But I matured very quickly in this glorious sunshine and gorgeous setting of California.

With the passing of the adolescent period, it became very evident to mother that men were attracted to me. I liked the company of men. They were jolly, good companions, splendid comrades and were not forever saying, "Don't

do this," or "Don't do that."

It worried mother because I was popular with them. The few with whom I came in contact were not attracted to Margaret. This was a bitter pill to both her and mother. Margaret is older than I and mother thought she should be given preference. But if a girl does not naturally attract men, all her efforts will fail.

That was the status of things when I first met William Desmond Taylor. I knew when I laid eyes on him that he was the one man in the world for me, and that he reciprocated my love.

It was not long afterward that we were in New England making a picture. My mother, my grandmother and sister were with the company.

I used to listen for his footsteps as he came into the door of the little hotel where we stayed. I recognized them as they went up the stairway and into his room, which was just over the little parlor where we all sat.

One time we all went into Boston for a dinner party for me. He rode in the automobile between my grandmother and me. The road was rough and bumpy, his arms were spread across the rear of the back seat in which we rode. One bump threw grandmother against him and he said, "I guess I will have to hold you." But his arm did not embrace me.

"Dare I? Dare I?" I said to myself. I dared and I reached up and tugged at his coat sleeve and he dropped his arm about my waist. And coming home he did the same thing again.

The thrill of that innocent act thrilled me for days and days. We spent what little time we could together, which was not much because mother always watched and every night after I had gone to bed she used to sit in the little parlor with him just as much as he would let her while he was working on his script.

One day it rained dreadfully. We were out somewhere and he wrapped his coat about me and took me to the hotel. There stood mother, fairly raging. She accused Mr. Taylor before the entire company of taking me out, humiliating him most shamefully.

For two days I hardly spoke to him and then I apologized for mother's

action.

"Your mother is right, Mary," he said. "She is right and you must always obey her."

That was the beginning of quarrels between mother and I. He soon left and came to California. Grandmother and I came later, while mother and sister remained in the East. Sister Margaret had a sort of beaked nose and she had it operated on to straighten it out. That kept them in the East.

We had a glorious reunion when we came west. Grandmother and I went riding with him, to dinner, to the theater. Then mother came.

He used to call at our house. But soon mother noticed his preference for me. She put a stop to it. Until she knew of my love for Mr. Taylor, she had only words of praise for him.

Then, suddenly, she turned against him.

I told Mr. Taylor of her attitude.

"Your mother knows best, Mary. I am an old man," he would say.

Then I would kiss the words away. I did not know Mr. Taylor's age, but he was not old in spirit or understanding and that was all that mattered to me. He was mine. I wanted him, to be his wife, to be able to do the thousand and one little things for him that only a wife can do. I would have married him then and there, but he said we must wait.

"Wait a while, Mary dear," he would caution. "Ah, do not think I don't want you, child. It is not that. But because of my great love for you I would shield you from the unkindness of the world. And the world would never forgive me for blighting your career. We must wait."

But I did not want to wait. Perhaps many women would be ashamed to admit what I have admitted. But I am not ashamed. Our love was a glorious thing. "Why should we wait?" I would protest. As long as we had each other what else counted? Then I wrote letters, passionate, impulsive letters. Some of them were published. Many of those letters were written two years before he died. And he kept them. That was my one thought at the time. He kept them.

Surely he must have loved me deeply, sincerely, to have kept them for so long. I did everything I could to make him break his resolve and marry at

once. Not to wait until I was older.

I loved him, oh, so sincerely and he loved me. He told me so many, many times.

We were never engaged in the sense that he had asked me to marry him and I had promised. I had always hoped that sometime we would be married. But I had planned in my own mind--never with Mr. Taylor--that as soon as I had made enough money so that mother and sister could be assured of a comfortable income for the rest of their lives--that perhaps we would be married. But not engaged in the sense of wearing a ring, or of telling one's friends of an intention to marry or of telling my mother. Marrying Mr. Taylor was just my dream--a dream which, voiced to him, always met with the answer that it was impossible.

Then mother took me to Europe. She told me of the lovely things we would buy over there. Things that were to be for my home, she said. Where are they today? Mother has them, if you please, and tells me they are not mine but hers.

Mr. Taylor went to Europe, too. But I did not get to see him. Mother saw to that. I pleaded with her to let me see him but she always insisted that she would not permit me to throw myself at Mr. Taylor's head. So we tramped all over Europe, always careful to keep a safe distance between me and the man I loved.

Eventually we came home. Mother and Margaret stopped over in Chicago and I came on west, home. I sent Mr. Taylor a message and he met me with flowers and a lovelight in his eyes that told me his affection for me had not diminished during my absence.

I had a few days of delightful comradeship with him before mother returned, for my grandmother understood our great love and did not offer any interference.

But when mother came home again Mr. Taylor was forbidden the house.

Whenever I could I would slip away with Mr. Taylor, but the times seemed so far apart. All too seldom.

Finally he told me I must not write him any more and must not call him

up, that he would telephone to me. I waited a week, two weeks, three weeks and he did not call. I swallowed my humiliation and called him. His butler answered and told me he was ill. He was too ill to talk with me. I gave the butler instructions of what to make him eat, to see that he was well covered during the night. For five days he did not eat a thing and during it all I suffered more than I can express.

Early in December before he was shot I had telephoned him and told him that I must see him. We had not talked with each other for weeks. We would pass on the lot and he would smile so sweetly, but in his eyes was the love-light that none but I could see. He made an appointment for me to come to his house in two weeks. Grandmother and I went. The house was dark. I was heartbroken. In the keyhole I twisted one of the little golden hairpins that I wear so that he would know I was there.

No word from him, no telephone call. On December 23 I was downtown buying some Christmas presents--one for him that I never got to give him. I have it still. There in the store opposite me in another aisle he stood. He smiled so sweetly, bowed and was gone. The clerk came and brought some samples of something and I told her to wrap it up. I don't even know what it was, I was so dazed. My maid grasped me by the arm thinking I was going to faint. He went away.

A few nights afterward I could not sleep. Everyone had gone to bed. I tiptoed to my grandmother's room and told her I must go to him. She tried to dissuade me, offered to go with me, but I told her no, that this was something I must do alone.

I gathered up his pictures and a little golden mesh bag he had given me and stopped to write him a note. It said:

"Dear William Desmond Taylor: This is good-bye. I want you to know that I will always love you. Mary."

I got out my car myself and went to his house. There was a light shining behind the blind. I rang the bell. All was silence. My heart stopped. I was afraid that perhaps he had gone out and that he had left the lights burning. But then I heard the rattle of a newspaper, the door opened and there he

stood.

"Why, Mary," he said. "It's quite late, isn't it?"

"Yes, it is, nearly 12 o'clock," I answered. "But I must see you," and I pushed past him into the room.

I noticed things were changed. That the furniture was moved, but on the wall there still hung my pictures, two of them and one of Mabel Normand.

"Mary you should not have come here," he said. He was trembling, seemed to grow old standing before me. Perspiration covered his brow.

"Here, read it. It's good-by," I said, handing him the note I had written. He read it and without a word turned to his desk, fumbled about and then handed me a note.

"I thought you had gotten this two weeks ago," he said. I started to open it.

"No, no," he cried. "Not here."

"But I must," I said. "I must. Maybe there is something in it I must answer."

"No, I beg of you, I entreat you. I cannot stand it if you do. Don't!"

"Then tell me that you love me," I said.

"I love you Mary, better than anything in this world, more than God," he answered.

He led me to my car, helped me in. I reached out and squeezed his hand. In the house he had clenched his teeth, his face was drawn; his fingernails had been gripped so hard that he brought blood when the nails cut the skin. He had used a silk handkerchief he had tucked in his upper coat pocket to wipe away the blood. As we stood by the car door I pulled this handkerchief from his pocket and took it, handing him mine. He kissed it and slowly walked back into the house. I drove home.

That was the last time I ever saw him alone. After that a few times I met him on the lot. Again he smiled and spoke, but that was all.

In February one morning I was dressing. It was about 11 o'clock. I was standing in my undergarments before the mirror fixing my hair. I heard my mother's footsteps coming, pat, pat, pat down the hall. I knew something was

wrong from the way she was walking.

She pounded on the door. "Let me in," she said.

"But I am not dressed," I protested. I had on nothing but a chemise, and mother always scolded me if I appeared before her even in a negligee.

"Let me in," she fairly shouted. "Let me in or I shall break down the door." All this time she was pounding.

I told her she must wait until I got into a dress and then I opened the door.

"What do you think has happened?" she said.

I looked at her, for she seemed greatly excited. "William Desmond Taylor has just been found murdered in his bed." She added some more words which were not altogether complimentary to Mr. Taylor. "Where were you last night?"

"I was here, of course," I said, hardly realizing what she was saying.

I was dumbfounded. Mother talked on in a most excited manner. I can't remember what she said--all of it--but it was something about this would teach me a lesson and how to behave myself in the future.

Then mother said, "Well, why don't you say something?"

I couldn't. I was too hurt.

I grabbed a hat, a wrap and then began to look through my pocket book, through the drawers of the dresser. I was hunting for the keys to my car. I thought I would go frantic in the few moments that it took.

"Where are you going?" mother asked.

"To him, of course," I replied.

"You cannot, you cannot. I shall not let you," she said and stood before the door to stop me. "You'll not leave this room. I'm going to lock you in and here you'll stay until I say you can come out."

I pleaded with her.

"You've kept me from the man I love in life and you can't keep me from him in death. I'll scream and raise the neighborhood. I am going to him if I have to throttle you to get past," I cried. And she stepped aside.

I drove to his home in a daze. Newspaper reporters, officers and other people were before the house. They were carrying out books and papers.

"Who are you and what are you doing here?" they asked me.

"I am Mary Miles Minter and I have come to see Mr. Taylor," I answered.

"But he is not here. They have taken him to the undertakers," they said.

I got in my car and drove downtown to the undertakers. I drove and drove, round and round that block until finally I found the place. I went in. I asked to see him and they told me I could not, that they were trying to find the bullet.

"I must see him. I must see him," I told the man.

"You cannot see him until after the inquest," I was told. "It is against the law for me to let you see him before."

Finally he promised me that I could see him the next day at noon and I went away.

Then I drove to Mabel Normand's home. I was frantic. Without ringing the bell I went in. There were reporters in the parlor waiting for her. I rushed upstairs. She was dressing.

I grasped her by the shoulders, shook her and looked straight into her eyes.

"What do you know about it?" I asked.

"Nothing," she answered simply.

"Not a thing but what they have told me."

And I believed her and still believe her.

The next day I went to the undertakers and they let me in all alone with him. I pulled back the sheet and looked at him. But he was not the same. His skin was waxen. I leaned down and put my arms about him, my cheek next to his.

His face was cold, so cold, but not a cold like ice.

"Do you love me, Desmond?" I said.

He answered me. I could hear his voice.

"I love you, Mary; I shall love you always," he whispered. I kissed him and put a red rose in his hand from some I had brought with me.

The door opened. The undertaker was there. I went away.

Mother and the attorney did the talking for me. They told of my

childlike affection for an old man. How I trusted and loved him as a father. But I tell you here and now it was no childlike affection. It was a full grown woman's love for her mate. For William Desmond Taylor is the one great love of my life and always will be.

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August 15, 1923
LOS ANGELES HERALD

How old is Mary Miles Minter?

Is she 30 years of age, as her father says she is?

Is she 21 years of age, as her mother says she is?

Or is the age of the beautiful motion picture star as much of a mystery to others as it is to herself and as she recorded in her diary, along with her heart secrets of her great passion for William Desmond Taylor when she wrote, "Nobody knows my real age."

The little book, whose mute revelations of the great love Mary Miles Minter bore her ill-fated fiance, has spoke again.

"Nobody knows my real age," Miss Minter wrote. "Even Jeanie McPherson, my closest friend, does not know that. They tell me I am a child. Perhaps I am. Yet I feel tonight, since you went away,"--referring to Taylor's death--that I am 50."

In news dispatches from Dallas, Tex., where he is employed on a newspaper as a proof reader, Homer Riley, who declares he is the father of Mary Miles Minter, emphatically states that Mary Miles Minter is 30 years of age.

The mystery of Miss Minter's age also may throw some light upon the recent avowal of the girl that Mrs. Shelby was not acting in purely a motherly role in attempting to disrupt the romance between Miss Minter and William Desmond Taylor, slain film director.

At the time of Taylor's murder Mrs. Shelby declared against the protest of Miss Minter that her daughter loved Taylor in a fatherly fashion.

"She knows better than that," Miss Minter vehemently declared.

"Mother knew just how I loved Mr. Taylor. There was no fatherly love in

our relationship."

Miss Minter then declared that her mother had endeavored to play the role of rival for the love of Taylor.

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August 15, 1923

LOS ANGELES RECORD

Mother Loved Taylor, Says Mary Minter

"Mother liked William Desmond Taylor very much. In fact she tried to interest him in herself. She sought to put me in the background and her interference in my romance was not because she wished to protect me but because she considered me a rival."

This new revelation of Mary Miles Minter, casts a different reflection of the movie star's relations with her mother, Mrs. Charlotte Shelby and leads friends of the girl to believe that perhaps love and rivalry and not finances after all is behind the quarrel between them.

"Mother thought that he was more her age than mine and she sought in every way to win his favor. It was not until she discovered that he cared more for me did she cease extending him the warmth of her friendship.

"When Mr. Taylor realized my mother's attitude--that she tried to keep me from him through jealousy--he, in his kind, considerate way, told me I was a little girl and that I should consider my mother. 'You know I love you more than anything in life but you must do nothing to displease her,' he told me."

A report from the Shelby home today indicated that Mrs. Shelby is willing to make any settlement with Mary providing the girl gives no more interviews regarding the Taylor affair.

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August 16, 1923

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Mary Miles Minter is Gone

Mary Miles Minter may perhaps not be missing, but she certainly is absent--A.W.O.L. may be the better way of putting it. Mary's friends searched for her in vain yesterday. At her Pasadena bungalow it was reported that she

did not come home Tuesday night and had not been there during yesterday.

At the home of Mary's mother, the home on South New Hampshire Street which Mary says is really hers, and not Mrs. Charlotte Shelby's, a maid volunteered the information that Mrs. Shelby was very weak and could not be seen. Her daughter, Margaret, is the constant companion of her mother.

Miss Margaret is declared to have laughed outright when she read an evening newspaper stating that in reality Mary is more than 30 years of age. Margaret, who has always admittedly been an older sister, said it was really a good joke--i.e., the item of Mary's age.

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August 16, 1923

LOS ANGELES EXPRESS

Everybody appeared to be sick of the whole thing. No one was to be seen. Sister Margaret was out--for the day.

Mrs. Shelby too ill to be seen.

Mary Miles Minter has disappeared, seemingly into thin air.

Evidently the generals in both camps needed a breathing spell, or did it mean retreat?

The Shelby-Minter duet was evidently to be given the soft pedal.

In one short week, they had run the gamut, with Mary's high angry trills, and mother's low dignified alto.

With Mary's doll story thrown into the ring for comedy, and the William Desmond Taylor case dug up to supply the tragedy.

The play seemed over, and the audience ready for a new farce or tragedy.

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August 15, 1923

LOS ANGELES HERALD

Documents Located in South

Mary Miles Minter was 21 years old April 25, last.

The statements attributed to her father that she was 30 years old were officially exploded today in dispatches received from Shreveport, La., where the official records showed that she was born April 25, 1902, and christened

Juliet Riley.

* * * * *

August 17, 1923

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Miss Minter is Found

After spending what she characterized at "the two happiest days of my life, because I did not see a single reporter," Mary Miles Minter was found by a reporter for the Times late last night.

But Miss Minter made up for time lost away from reporters by declaring she has not "disappeared," but is only seeking seclusion, that she is "still keeping advised as to mother's health," that she has not signed any theatrical contracts as yet; and that she will be very grateful if anyone can prove to her that she is 30 years old, as reported.

Miss Minter's statement is as follows:

"If the Los Angeles Times or anyone else in this world can prove that I am 30 years old, I will be deeply grateful to them. I supposed I was only 21 years old. If I am really 30, I will be able to collect from my mother a much larger sum than I hoped to get.

"The money I am seeking an accounting for comprises my earnings under my Lasky contract for the past three years, or, in other words, since I have been of legal age in California. The three years is on the basis that I am 21 years old. My mother has always told me that the legal age is 21 years, therefore, I had supposed I was a minor until my twenty-first birthday. As a matter of fact, however, legally I have been my own boss for three years and did not know it.

"I have made considerable sums of money in pictures in the years prior to my eighteenth birthday. Therefore, if I were now 30 I could have more years of earnings for which I could seek an accounting from my mother."

In the meantime Mrs. Shelby is reported as still too ill to be interviewed. Miss Margaret, upon orders of the family attorney, has nothing further to say.

Word was also received from Dallas that the correct age of Miss Minter

is 21 years. J. H. Reilly, her father confirmed that Miss Minter was born in Shreveport, La., in 1902. He also denied that he had made any statements to the effect that Miss Minter was 30 years of age.

* * * * *

(This concludes the series "The Humor of A Hollywood Murder")

NEXT ISSUE:

Did a Canadian Army Veteran Kill Taylor?
Charlotte Shelby's Last Two Interviews (1937)
Interview with Mary Miles Minter (1937)
Wallace Smith: February 10, 1922
The Truth About Hollywood, Part 1

NOTES:

[1]"kale"-- money.

[2]This poem should obviously be sung to the tune "Sidewalks of New York."

[3]"demi-monde"-- the class of women who have lost social standing because of sexual promiscuity.

[4]"poms"--Pomeranian dogs.

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.uno.edu/~drif/arbuckle/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>

For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 12 -- December 1993 Editor: Bruce Long *
* All reprinted material is in the public domain *

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Part 1 [A brief tour of 1922 Hollywood]

What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

Time-Life's "Unsolved Crimes"--Bravo!

Time-Life Books has recently published the "Unsolved Crimes" volume (ISBN 0-7835-0012-2) in their True Crime series, and it includes a 40-page chapter on the Taylor murder. This is unquestionably the best short recap of

the Taylor case yet published! It attempts to touch all the bases, briefly explore all major theories, and present the pertinent facts in a lively and well-written manner. It essentially skims the cream from the books by Kirkpatrick, Giroux, and Long. There is a handful of minor errors--the most glaring is the picture of Mary Miles Minter on p. 140 mis-identified as Margaret Fillmore. But when compared to the typical error-laden recaps published elsewhere in years past (see "Hollywood Mysteries--Shredded" in TAYLOROLOGY 11), this recap looks like a shining jewel, and establishes an excellent standard by which future short recaps of the Taylor case should be judged. If you are interested in reading about the Taylor case for the first time, "Unsolved Crimes" is the perfect place to start; if you are a seasoned Taylor case buff, you will still want this volume for your library even though it contains no new revelations.

Kudos to Time-Life for this one!

As would be expected from Time-Life, the chapter includes a lot of photographs--a nice selection of 30 images. Still, the recap would have been improved if several other visual items had been included (none of the following were in the Giroux or Kirkpatrick books, either):

1. Photograph of Faith MacLean in Alvarado Court. She was possibly the only one to see Taylor's killer, and was sitting on her sofa knitting a sweater when the shot was fired. A photograph published in the May 1992 issue of Picture-Play shows Faith and Douglas MacLean sitting outside on the bench in Alvarado Court--just a few yards from Taylor's front door. In the photograph she is knitting the very same sweater. Time-Life did not include any pictures of Faith MacLean in "Unsolved Crimes."

2. The photograph of Mary Miles Minter which she had given to Taylor with her inscription: "For William Desmond Taylor--Artist, Gentleman, Man. Sincere good wishes. Mary Miles Minter. -1920-". That photograph is one of the more stunningly beautiful photos of Minter ever taken, and would have been a nice complement to the photograph of Taylor that was inscribed to Minter, which Time-Life did print.

3. The diagram of the murder scene published in a Los Angeles newspaper

on the same day the body was found.

4. The photograph of Taylor directing Winifred Kingston and Dustin Farnum in "Davy Crockett" published in a 1916 issue of Film Fun. Time-Life only printed one picture of Taylor directing a film, a photograph showing Taylor from behind.

5. One of the code love letters written by Minter and found among Taylor's effects.

6. "A Cubistaylor Picture." Several editorial cartoonists used the Taylor murder as inspiration for their drawings. One of the best cartoons on this subject was printed in the Pittsburgh Sun on February 11, 1922.

An attempt will be made to soon place scanned images of all six of the above items on an Internet gopher server. Details will appear in the next issue of TAYLOROLOGY.

Did a Canadian Army Veteran Kill Taylor?

The facts of William Desmond Taylor's military service are as follows: He enlisted as a private in the British Army and arrived at Camp Fort Edward, Nova Scotia, Canada, in August 1918. He was assigned to the 5th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers. Because of his leadership experience he was rapidly promoted and was a sergeant major in two months. His unit sailed for England and was assigned to Hounslow Barracks in November 1918. At that point he was commissioned Lieutenant and transferred to the Expeditionary Force Canteen, Royal Army Service Corps, stationed at Dunkirk. He was second in command under Maj. Meghar. He was released from active duty around the beginning of May 1919, and was a Captain in the British Reserves.

The rumors of a revengeful Canadian veteran stem from several press reports:

* * * * *

February 17, 1922

SANTA ANA REGISTER

The man who may have murdered William D. Taylor, motion picture director, in Los Angeles, the night of February 1, was "given a lift" in the automobile of a prominent Tustin rancher late in the afternoon of Monday January 30. The given name of the man who was then assisted was "Spike."

This startling information came to light here late this afternoon when the rancher in question, who declined to allow his name to be used in connection with the case, but whose name is known to The Register, gave full details of what occurred when he gave "Spike" and a companion a ride in his automobile, from Tustin in the Santa Fe tracks, Santa Ana.

Spike was the taller of the two men. During a conversation while the rancher and the two men were en route to Santa Ana, the subject of soldiers came up, as Spike was dressed in army trousers, wrap, leggings and army shoes.

The rancher mentioned Captain N. M. Holderman, stating that the latter had just received a new decoration. This set Spike to enveighing bitterly against captains in general.

Then spike declared there was "one --- --- --- in Southern California" that he was "going to get" if he could find him.

The shorter of the two men then asked Spike:

"You mean Bill?"

The rancher did not recall Spike's answer to this question, but it is assured that the reply was in the affirmative.

Later, when Spike continued to talk along similar lines, the short man cautioned Spike:

"For ---'s sake shut up."

As the two men were about to leave the rancher's automobile at the Santa Fe crossing on First Street, an old-fashioned Colt's revolver dropped into the mud from beneath Spike's trousers belt.

The rancher, startled, inquired of Spike what he intended to do with the revolver.

Spike replied that they "figured that they might be held up."

As the rancher was about to drive on, Spike called to him to wait, in order that he might clean the revolver. The mud was carefully cleaned from the weapon and the rancher went on his way, noticing that the two men walked up the tracks in the direction of the railroad station.

The rancher noticed that the barrel of the revolver had been sawed off. The sight was missing. The gun was either .32 or .38 caliber.

The rancher also recalled that the two men made minute inquiries of him regarding train and stage service from Santa Ana to San Diego.

The two men were thereupon asked the reason for the questions, to which they answered that "they were just getting lined up."

* * * * *

February 28, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO CALL-POST

Investigation of the Taylor murder mystery shifted again to San Francisco today when search was started by detectives from the office of District Attorney Matthew Brady for a Canadian army veteran who is said to have made the statement here in January that he was "going to Hollywood to get revenge or satisfaction on Taylor."

While the identity of the Taylor in question was not given as William Desmond Taylor, slain moving picture director, the Canadian trooper said that the man he was after "had been his superior officer in the army and had been responsible for his being courtmartialed in France and punished by being lashed to the wheel of a gun two hours during the morning and afternoon for ninety days."

The chance remark of the former Canadian soldier was made to another British army veteran, now a resident of San Francisco, a week before the moving picture director was mysteriously slain, and when the man appeared in this city a few days ago with a sum of money much larger than he had a month ago the San Franciscan recalled the remark of his acquaintance that he was going to "get Taylor," and made known the fact

to District Attorney Brady, who is withholding the identity of his informant.

District Attorney Brady listened with close attention to the narrative told by the former soldier, now working as a house painter in San Francisco, and declared that the report was worthy of a thorough investigation. He immediately dispatched detectives to find the author of the threatening remarks and check up on his actions for the last month.

The Canadian Veteran told his San Francisco friend a few days ago that he was preparing to leave for Australia.

In telling Brady about the incident the San Francisco veteran of the royal forces said that he met the Canadian January 25 and that in the course of a talk about their experiences in the British forces, each told how he had been courtmartialed for infractions of the military rules.

Forcefully expressing himself on his punishment, the Canadian is said to have remarked:

"I'm going to Hollywood and get Taylor. It will cost him something, or I'll get satisfaction in some other way."

The San Franciscan told Brady that he met the man on the street two days ago and he displayed a roll of currency containing \$50 bills.

* * * * *

March 18, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

A letter was received from a former army officer in London, England, who wrote that one day after the Armistice was signed he was dining with Captain Taylor in a London hotel. As a stranger in the uniform of the Canadian army crossed the dining hall Taylor suddenly remarked:

"There goes a man who is going to get me if it takes a thousand years to do it."

Taylor then went on to explain that the man was a sergeant in his

company whom he had reported and had courtmartialed for the theft of army property. A description of the man was contained in the letter.

* * * * *

In addition to those press reports, Taylor's army diary reportedly does make a brief mention of the courtmartial. No details or names are given. [1]

However, Taylor served in the British (not Canadian) Army. So what it all boils down to is the question: Would Canadian soldiers have been under Taylor's jurisdiction, either in the Royal Fusiliers or the Royal Army Service Corps? Or did the British and Canadian armies keep their units strictly separated, even when the British units were in Canada? Certainly the courtmartial records for both units must still exist somewhere, and combing them for those few months should give us the names and details of any such courtmartials.

One reason why the revengeful Canadian veteran theory has considerable appeal is because it was reported that in the days and hours before Taylor's murder, a man had been asking around, trying to find out where Taylor lived. Most of the "usual suspects" (Sands, Shelby, etc.) already knew where Taylor lived, or else they could have found out through discreet means. But an out-of-town Canadian veteran would have had no choice but to ask strangers.

Charlotte Shelby's Last Two Interviews (1937)

Over the years Charlotte Shelby, the mother of Mary Miles Minter, has remained a prime suspect in the Taylor murder. She owned a gun similar to the kind that killed Taylor and had threatened Taylor's life if he did not stay away from Mary. Throughout her lifetime she gave very few interviews in which she was willing to discuss the murder. The following are the last two such interviews known to exist.

* * * * *

June 11, 1937

A. M. Rothen

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Mrs. Charlotte Shelby knows she is under investigation in the William Desmond Taylor murder case and welcomes the opportunity to face the issue.

Neither defiant nor cowed, she came forward yesterday to demand immediate action by the authorities, at any cost.

Weary of years of gossip and innuendo, she thinks the time has come to bring before the proper tribunals every one who has any knowledge of or connection with the 15-year-old slaying of the famous motion picture director.

And, if in the interests of justice she must suffer temporarily the inconvenience of questioning and investigation, she is willing to assume the role so every vital fact may be developed, and all the "froth and fables" with which it had become surrounded in the last decade and a half may forever be brushed away.

This is what she said yesterday in a remarkable interview with The Examiner, given in the presence of her attorney, Clyde F. Murphy, here in Los Angeles.

Seven years ago, speaking to this reporter, Mrs. Shelby made similar demands, but under somewhat different circumstances. [2]

Since then many things transpired in her life. The fortunes of her daughters, Mary Miles Minter and Margaret Shelby Fillmore, had been all but swept away by theft and litigation. Civil suits by the dozen have come and passed. These suits involved disputes in her own family, and then, last month, came the dramatic appearance before the grand jury of her own daughter, Margaret, whose testimony laid the foundation for the present revival of the celebrated murder case.

"First of all," said Mrs. Shelby yesterday, "I want every one to know that I bear no malice toward anyone or resent anything my daughter Margaret or anyone else may have told the grand jury.

"Margaret is my daughter, and her welfare and future is the important thing.

"I feel that the truth, like murder, will out. I know that charges made must be proven and that only through investigation and search can facts, long forgotten or covered up, be reconstructed and made useful in an inquiry of this sort.

"Therefore I say: If the authorities want to consider me a suspect in this case, I am willing--if that will help once and for all to verify or disprove the rumors and tips and ideas that have been cluttering up this case from the very start.

"I am prepared, and will await the outcome of the grand jury investigation with interest, but without the slightest fear," she said.

And then, for the first time, Mrs. Shelby gave her views on Mary Miles Minter's love for William Desmond Taylor.

"This romantic attachment of Mr. Taylor for Mary was something I learned only after Mr. Taylor was killed. It was all news to me. So far as we were concerned, we were glad to see Mary go with Mr. Taylor. He was such a gentleman and we felt Mary was well chaperoned when out with him to dinner or the theater," she said calmly.

"You see," she continued, "I would have no motive.

"Neither was I in love with Mr. Taylor. To me he was just one of Mary's directors--a fine gentleman, and that's all."

Q. "Were you ever in Taylor's house?"

A. "Yes, once," she replied.

Mary was late in coming home. She had a new car. The family worried, Mrs. Shelby said, so she, Charlotte Whitney, the secretary, and Chauncey Eaton, the chauffeur, drove to Taylor's house. Taylor's telephone was not in the book and that was the only way to reach him.

"Mr. Taylor came to the door. I told him of my anxiety for Mary. He called the assistant director--I think it was Frank Connor, and asked him if he had seen Mary. Then he said, 'Mary should not go away like this,' and I went home. Mrs. Whitney remained in the car, as did Chauncey.

"The rest of all this stuff they are talking about now is silly," Mrs. Shelby went on.

"I was home on the night of the murder--with Carl Stockdale. We played cards from 7 till 9. It was Carl Stockdale who called me the next morning to tell me Mr. Taylor was dead.

Q. "Did you ever own a gun, Mrs. Shelby?"

"There was only one gun in the Shelby family," she said. "That was given me by a man in Santa Barbara.

"Bullets were taken out of this gun, but that was two years before the murder. One night, after being scolded, Mary went to my room and locked herself in. We heard a shot. The door was locked. Chauncey and a night watchman broke it down and there, on the floor was Mary. When we saw she was not hurt, my mother, Mrs. Julia Miles, said to Chauncey: 'Take the bullets out of that gun and give them to me.'

"She took the gun and I never saw it or the bullets again."

Miss Minter, some days ago, told The Examiner a similar version of the firing of the gun. She said she was fumbling with the gun when it was discharged. [3]

All the other allegations now being made by witnesses, Mrs. Shelby said, are baseless--and most of them are "also silly."

"Why didn't they look into all those things at the time of the murder?" she demanded.

"If the authorities had followed the real important clues, instead of chasing after persons whose names had Hollywood glamour, the case probably would have been solved long ago and all of us spared this perpetual annoyance."

Mrs. Shelby then expressed regret that Stockdale, the veteran Hollywood actor, has been mentioned in the case. "Poor Carl, such a faithful friend and such a gentle soul," Mrs. Shelby sighed.

* * * * *

June 12, 1937

LOS ANGELES NEWS

Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, mother of Mary Miles Minter, told the whole story yesterday of the mysterious bullet for which Junior G-men of the district

attorney's office were seeking by means of a fluoroscope in the William Desmond Taylor murder investigation. [4]

While the district attorney's clue-seekers turned the fluoroscope on the walls of a former home of Mrs. Shelby, the latter admitted the missing bullet had been fired from her pearl-handled revolver and that the remaining bullets in the gun had been handed to Chauncey Eaton, her former chauffeur.

Mrs. Shelby said the missing bullet, believed to have lodged in a closet wall, was fired by Miss Minter two years before the murder, apparently as a joke.

A .38 caliber bullet was found on a rafter in the basement of Mrs. Shelby's former home by investigators several weeks ago, according to the district attorney's office. Eaton said he placed the remaining bullets from Mrs. Shelby's gun there after the shooting at the closet wall by Miss Minter.

The bullet did not lodge in the ceiling, as the investigators assume, Mrs. Shelby declared.

"It penetrated the door jam of the closet and lodged in the back wall of the closet. The bullet hole in the wooden door jam was plainly visible for a time afterwards. I really don't remember whatever was done about it--whether a new paneling was put on or not," Mrs. Shelby said.

"When we rushed into the room," Mrs. Shelby said, "Mary was lying on a rug on the floor with her hand over her face. She removed her hand, looked at us, and said, 'ha-ha'."

Witnesses to the scene, Mrs. Shelby said, were Mrs. Charlotte Whitney, her former secretary, Eaton, her chauffeur, and Mrs. Mary Miles, her mother, now dead. [5]

"My mother demanded the gun, saying, 'There'll be no more of this gun-play around this house'," Mrs. Shelby continued.

"She took the gun and handed it to Eaton, telling him to unload it. Eaton emptied five remaining shells from the little pearl-handled gun into his hand and handed the gun back to my mother. I don't know what mother did with it after that."

Mrs. Shelby "pooh-pooed" a recent declaration of a witness of knowledge

of threats made against Taylor's life.

"One night in June, two years before the murder," the mother continued, "Mary had not come home at a late hour. She was driving a new car, and I was worried about her. Charlotte Whitney and I decided we should look for her. Eaton knew where Taylor lived, and I ordered him to drive out there. That was the only time I was ever in Mr. Taylor's bungalow. I merely asked him if he knew the whereabouts of my daughter. He replied that he did not, and we left."

A report made to the district attorney's office by Albert E. Harris, former taxi driver, that he drove Miss Minter, weeping and hysterical, and an actor from the Ambassador Hotel to Miss Minter's home the afternoon of the Taylor Taylor was shot, and overheard scraps of conversation, was branded as "silly, and ridiculous" by Mrs. Shelby.

"Mary was on location at the beach that day, her work requiring her to dive into the ocean all day. She had caught a bad cold, and returned from work late in the afternoon, just in time for dinner. She certainly was not galivanting around from the Ambassador to her home in a taxicab," Mrs. Shelby said.

A narcotic smuggler, Mrs. Shelby said she believes, killed Taylor.

"I believe he was slain by someone who has never been under investigation, but who wanted to remove Taylor from the path of narcotic smugglers.

Mrs. Shelby said she knew that Taylor was safeguarding a prominent film actress from attempts of underworld characters to lead the actress into the drug habit. [6]

* * * * *

Several of Shelby's statements in the above two interviews appear to be false:

1. Shelby stated "This romantic attachment of Mr. Taylor for Mary was something I learned only after Mr. Taylor was killed. It was all news to me. So far as we were concerned, we were glad to see Mary go with Mr. Taylor." On the contrary, there are several reliable sources--including Mary's own

statement--which clearly show that during 1920/1921 Shelby knew about the Taylor/Minter romance, and she was strongly opposed to it.

2. Shelby says her gun was given to her by a man in Santa Barbara, but he (Harry Harris) denied giving it to her. It appears the gun was given to her in 1920 by Frank Brown, a night watchman, while the family was living in the mansion on Fremont.

3. Shelby says the last time she saw the gun was on the day of Mary's "fake suicide scene" which took place in 1920 while the family was living on Fremont. But the chauffeur, Chauncey Eaton, stated that Shelby unloaded the gun and gave the bullets to him several months after the murder--when Shelby was living at Casa de Marguerita on New Hampshire--and that he placed the bullets on a rafter in the basement at that time. Since a bullet was indeed located on the Casa de Marguerita rafter, it indicates that Shelby was lying about never having seen the gun again after living on Fremont.

Interview with Mary Miles Minter (1937)

May 6, 1937

LOS ANGELES HERALD-EXPRESS

...Miss Minter discussed the new development and the Taylor case history in detail. [7]

"I'll be glad to tell them all I know," she said. It'll be something like this:

"There is nothing in the diaries I would not be willing to show the world, if I thought it would help in the case. Most of them were written long before the murder--by a girl going to school and working. Can you imagine there is anything there that would help? Don't you think I would have turned everything over to the police if it could have done the least possible good?"

As she used the word "murder" to refer to the death of her loved one, Miss Minter's voice broke.

"I was sitting on the sofa in my home--my sister was there, and she

knows I was there that night that--that--" She was unable to finish the sentence.

She referred to the night of Feb. 1, 1922, when Taylor was shot to death in his swank apartment.

"My dear precious grandmother, Julia Branch Miles, and our cook, Belle Simpson, was with us that evening, I remember," Miss Minter continued.

We knew nothing about it until the next day. Those next days were almost a blank for me.

"And mother knew nothing of it. My mother likes to talk for a long time on the telephone and that night she made several calls and talked to people for hours. My sister knew that, too."

Miss Minter told how she came back to her home last night after dining out, to find Capt. Jesse Winn, district attorney investigator, there.

"He said he'd been there since 5 o'clock," Miss Minter said. "My maid was frightened to death. He had searched the entire house.

"I helped him in the search--he was nice about it, although I made a mistake and called him 'Detective Winn' instead of 'Captain.'

"I wanted him to take everything he wanted, but he took only the diaries. Then he gave me the subpoena. I asked him: 'Is this another attempt to involve me or my family?' but all he said was: 'Just be down there in the morning.'

"I'll be there, and I'll tell all I known again--but I'm afraid its just another scare case that won't amount to a hill of beans."

Miss Minter said she believed the present re-opening of the case was due to an "upheaval" by her sister.

"Margaret has been bitter against our mother, as you know," the actress said. "They, as well, as I have been involved in litigation of some kind for years.

"Margaret wanted to be an actress and yet I took the limelight.

"It's all come out in court, anyway, and as you remember in one case Mother had Margaret kept out of court by calling a doctor for her.

"I'm afraid this is just an upheaval."

Asked if she had any theory of her own as to who shot her fiance, Miss Minter shook her head sadly.

"What do you think I've thought about these 15 years? If I had any theory I would have taken it to the police at once. I've wracked and wracked my brains--I can't think of an enemy in the world that Mr. Taylor might have had."

Miss Minter was asked about the possibility of Edward Sands, Taylor's valet, who was charged with the murder but who was never apprehended, being involved in the crime.

"Sands?--No. He was just a fat, jolly cockney. He couldn't have done it. I just wish I knew where he was so I could tell him to come out and clear himself."

Wallace Smith: February 10, 1922

The following is another sample of Wallace Smith's sensationalized reporting, published 10 days after the murder.

* * * * *

February 10, 1922

Wallace Smith

CHICAGO AMERICAN

One of filmland's best known producers of pictures, also known for a notorious affair conducted with an actress named in the mystery of William Desmond Taylor's slaying, was sought by detectives today to account for his movements on the night the eccentric director was murdered. [8]

Ever since Taylor's death, it became known, this producer has instructed his secretary to inform callers he was too ill to be seen. This instruction also held good for the police, who accepted it. Such seems to be the reluctance of the Los Angeles police to investigate too sharply any incident that might annoy the Hollywood moving picture colony.

It was declared that Prosecutor Thomas Lee Woolwine, who had taken the

investigation out of the hands of the police, was ready to demand the appearance of the famous producer. In fact, it was stated the prosecutor had motored to the studio where the producer was said to be in seclusion.

The affair of the producer and the actress was one of the scandals of Hollywood. These dispatches recently referred to the history of the "romance," the first fights between the two and their final separation, which led the actress to the fatal slavery of drugs.

Recently the affair was revived. All Hollywood buzzed with gossip as it learned the actress had returned to the direction of this producer in the films -- and it was rumored, in life. [9]

Then came rumors of the actress' affair with Taylor, the producer, his affection rekindled, was known to be jealous. It was stated the actress had endeavored to break off her association with the director and that a final quarrel between them occurred last New Year's eve. [10]

Later, it was stated, the slain director refused to abandon his latest light o'love and this, it was said resulted in a bitter enmity between him and the producer.

It was theorized today, the producer resolved to win back the whole love of the actress, confronted Taylor, demanded he drop out of the young woman's life and finally killed him.

The district attorney, while waiting to assemble the story of the director, began a hunt for a secret safety deposit box said to have been maintained by Taylor. In it he hoped to find some clew to the mysterious slaying.

Earlier in the day the district attorney had given three film actresses known from Broadway to the narrowest main street that ever supported a split-reel nickelodeon, the chance to come before him and tell what they knew of Taylor's strange life and his weird death.

The three actresses were:

Mabel Normand, once reported engaged to wed Taylor, who was a visitor at his home a matter of minutes before the assassin wiped out Taylor's life. She was to be asked of her visit, her long companionship with Taylor, the

statement of his valet that she and Taylor were to marry "and have a little baby," an alleged quarrel with the director and the letters she wrote to the man of mystery.

Mary Miles Minter, who was Taylor's confidante -- except in regard to his deserted wife and daughter -- and who was to be questioned regarding the "I love you -- I love you" note written on her stationery and found in Taylor's home with a dainty handkerchief bearing the initials "M.M.M."

Edna Purviance, leading woman for Charles Chaplin and neighbor of Taylor in Alvarado St. She visited the Taylor home at midnight the day of the slaying and saw the lights burning in his study, but could not gain an answer to a ring at the bell. [11]

It was reported that Claire Windsor, another actress whose name had been linked with Chaplin's as well as with Taylor's, and Neva Gerber, once engaged to marry Taylor, also might be called by the prosecutor.

The stories of the actresses were waited as District Attorney Thomas Lee Woolwine created a sensation by taking charge in person of the investigation of Taylor's death, which appears to have been badly bungled by the police.

As he drove forward in his inquiry, it was reported that a special grand jury would be demanded by the authorities to batter down the wall of silence which has been built to protect the wilder set of Hollywood -- and behind which the slayer of Taylor has escaped.

Whether or not the three film stars would appear was a question that seemed to rest between them and their managers.

Miss Normand, who had been reportedly sufficiently recovered from the shock of Taylor's death to resume her studio work, was reported to have had a relapse shortly after it was known that the prosecutor desired to speak with her.

At the home of Miss Minter it was stated that the young star still suffered from the nervous jar occasioned by Taylor's death, a jar which she confided to friends brought to her face an expression never seen there before -- "frozen horror," she called it.

It was learned that Miss Minter had already been questioned by the

district attorney for two hours last Tuesday evening. The Lasky beauty, it was stated, had admitted her great affection for the slain director. This interview, however, was considered quite unsatisfactory and the star was to be given an opportunity to talk again.

That she was the first to be questioned was considered of deep significance because it had been rumored from the first that, whatever her feeling toward the director, he had shrined her in his heart as the one woman in the world.

There was a new significance given the letters of Miss Normand, too, when it was reported that she had informed certain officials that she had gone to the home of Taylor on Wednesday to demand that he return the letters she had written him.

"Not that they meant anything to any one but us," declared Miss Normand, "but I feared that they might fall into other hands and be misconstrued."

According to one version of her alleged demand for the letters Taylor told Miss Normand that he had mailed the packet of letters to her home. It was on this assurance that she left his Alvarado St. home a short time before the hour upon which the police have agreed the murder occurred.

It has been remarkable from the time Taylor's body was found that those who seemed closest to the tragedy were not closely questioned by the police. Certainly this sensational case, a crime that has aroused the entire country, has not been conducted with anything resembling even the rudiments of police work.

There have been sinister rumors of attempts to smother all inquiry into the crime -- even reports that money has changed hands. It seems incredible that even the millions of dollars that are tied up in the movies would be used in such a manner to protect the pampered darlings of the pictures.

Yet the police at the time the prosecutor took hold of the investigation seemed to be exactly where they were at the time the crime was discovered. A little more bewildered, if anything.

Personages of the films, apparently because of their might in front of the camera, were not disturbed, despite the fact that every circumstance

indicated they would be able to shed light on the crime.

Just two calls were made on Miss Normand, it was learned. She refused to pay any attention to the first. At the second, after keeping the detectives waiting in their high-laced hiking boots and mackinaw jackets, she issued a formal statement.

Prosecutor Woolwine declared his intention of taking a stenographic signed statement from each witness called to his office. His work began yesterday and went on until close to midnight.

In that time he interviewed, among others, Henry Peavey, Taylor's houseman; Mrs. Douglas MacLean, actor's wife and neighbor of Taylor's; Douglas MacLean; Christine Jewett, nurse in the MacLean household; Harry Fellows, assistant director to Taylor; Howard Fellows, Taylor's chauffeur; an unnamed male witness said to be the sweetheart of a movie player and Arthur Hoyt, film actor.

The chief information reported to have been distilled from this questioning was that Edward F. Sands, former valet and secretary to Taylor, was not the man seen by Mrs. MacLean at Taylor's door immediately after the shot was heard.

But the new investigation brought about the discovery of a new witness, a Los Angeles policeman named Thomas Long, who told Prosecutor Woolwine that on the night of the murder he had seen a man skulking behind a telephone pole in the vicinity of Taylor's home.

"He ran when I came up, said the policeman, "and he disappeared in the dark before I could reach the spot. I noticed near the telephone pole where he had been hiding the stubs of two cigarettes. They were gold tipped and a brand I never heard of before. When I read how Taylor always smoked that kind and that some were stolen from his house, I thought that this man might have had something to do with it.

Another report was that an earlier woman visitor had preceded Mabel Normand to Taylor's study. The prosecutor was especially interested in discovering why the name of this woman -- said to have been another movie star of the first magnitude -- had been concealed.

The federal agents called into the case, who already have compiled quite a secret history of Hollywood's hidden life, were said to be on the trail of a new woman in the case. Incidentally they still pursued the twisting path of the drug peddlers in the private studio life of the moving picture colony, despite the protests of the movie magnates.

The latest chapter they opened concerns one of the strangest "triangles" that ever was introduced in Hollywood domestic geometry. It has for its chief character a famed foreign actress, known almost as widely for her eccentricity of dress as for her extremely emotional acting. [12]

The other two were an actor and actress recently divorced. He has recently won great fame in a celebrated picture, his graduation from his former role as a dancing partner. [13]

The foreign actress took a great fancy to the young woman. Always known for her friendship for girls, she seemed especially fond of this one. So much so that she invited her to live at her home. The invitation was accepted and the foreign star lavishly furnished a room to be occupied by the other.

This was before the marriage of the recent divorcee. He came in from location one evening and called on the young woman. It was a Hollywood formal call. with plenty of liquor for both. While the alcohol still was working it struck them that it might be an innovation to get married. They did so.

Next day the foreign star heard about it, after the young man had gone back to work on location. The young bride came to take possession.

"You did not think I could be jealous, eh?" said the great foreign star. "Look!"

She led the young woman to the lavishly furnished room. Then, as the other stood there spellbound, the foreign actress began wrecking the place. She tore down pictures and ripped up rugs. She slashed open cushions and tore the bedclothes to ribbons. She gouged the tinted walls and hurled pottery through the window.

"Now go, ingrate," she hurled at the young woman. She left -- and has

not returned.

The divorce was a sensation. The friendship of the young bride and the foreign actress was not mentioned in the divorce proceedings. Nor were the escapades of the young bride with other women whose friendship formed part of Hollywood's daily gossip.

Strangely enough, on a recent eastern trip, the young actor -- then getting divorced -- and the foreign actress traveled in the same car. [14]

It may not be ethical but this correspondent asks indulgence to make a correction of his reports through these dispatches. Two or three days ago he recounted the adventure of a prominent actress who, during a fight with her favorite director, was struck over the head with a beer bottle. [15]

This was hotly denied today by a friend of the director, who grieved that such an impression be made public. He admitted the secret love affair conducted by the star and her director, as well as his affair with another woman that provoked the assault.

"But it wasn't a beer bottle." explained this champion. "He hit her with a shoe."

There have been many denials about the Hollywood revelations. Public officials have been prevailed upon to utter statements defending Hollywood. Movie magnates have upheld the cavortings of their golden pets.

Generally these denials are every bit as convincing as that which substituted the boot for the beer bottle. Since the entrance of the federal agents into the investigation these denials have been especially directed at the stories of the operations of the dope ring in Hollywood and the weakness of several of the country's leading stars for drugs.

In reply to these might be taken the statement of one of Los Angeles' leading physicians. It is typical of the views of several physicians interviewed on the subject. Their names, of course, may not be revealed.

"Don't make any mistake about the dope ring," declared the physician. "The dope peddlers deliver the stuff to the homes of the actors and actresses as the grocer or butcher delivers goods at the homes of other people.

"What is more, they take orders over the telephone just like any market.

That is what makes it so easy for these spoiled children of the films to find their way to the downward path and why it is so difficult for them to win their way back again.

"It is the business of the drug peddlers to hold their own customers and get new ones. And they are business men.

"There is one case of a woman named in the Taylor case. It is pitiful. She is a gay personality and she has made a game fight to redeem herself. [16]

"She began to use morphine and go to these dope parties after she had broken with her director. They tell me she really loved him. And he seemed very fond of her at one time. They split finally when he took up a young girl she was trying to help out in the pictures.

"It seemed to harden her. Finally her health broke. Friends took her to a hospital and she went through the torture that a drug victim must go through in the effort to break the habit. She seemed to have been cured.

"But always 'way back in her brain was the craving. And what with the loss of the man she loved her brilliant success on the screen seemed empty to her. She grew moody and depressed. There came a day when she could stand it no longer. And on the same day a friend offered her a 'shot.' She took it, and she has been going downward ever since.

"I don't think she will ever try to cure herself again and it can be only a year or so before she will be through with the pictures forever.

"It is amazing and shocking to see some of these young women whose looks mean everything to them -- their very life -- taking to the drugs that will rob them of every vestige of beauty within a few months.

"There was one of these screen stars in here the other day, begging me to do something to save her. She is just coming into her full power as a star and already every trace of the drug fiend is apparent in her. [17]

"Her mother was with her and she wept as she pleaded with me to save her daughter. I could not handle the case. I sent her to another surgeon. He told me that the girl seemed willing enough to take the cure.

"But even while he had her in the hospital she was visited by friends who brought her the forbidden 'dope.' That is another way the dope ring

works. It has its agents even among the actors and actresses who are quick to take advantage of an opportunity.

The activities of the dope ring also were said to interest the British royal secret service, which, according to Maj. Thomas A. Osborne, British consul at Los Angeles, has undertaken to solve the mystery of Taylor's slaying.

The police have not abandoned the theory that Taylor was killed by a blackmailer and they have renewed their search for "Dapper Dan" Collins, a New York gunman, wanted for murder in the East. Collins, it became known, had been in Hollywood a few days before Taylor's slaying.

In the aftermath of the Taylor murder, many newspaper articles were written purporting to reveal the truth about Hollywood. Some, like the sensational writings of Wallace Smith, Edward Doherty and Richard Burritt, focused on lurid rumors--reporting every sensational whisper as fact. Other stories, penned by the screen writers and press agents, attempted to whitewash the truth about Hollywood. The New York Herald sent one of their experienced investigative reporters to Hollywood to investigate and write the balanced truth, as he found it. His five-part series, "The Truth About Hollywood," published in the New York Herald between March 12 and April 9, 1922, gave an insightful look into the background of 1922 Hollywood. It provides essentially no information about the murder itself, but it does give information about life in the Hollywood movie colony, the world in which Taylor lived.

* * * * *

March 12, 1922
Thoreau Cronyn
NEW YORK HERALD

The Truth About Hollywood
Two unfortunate incidents of a tragic nature have directed public

attention to Hollywood--a colony which, because of these happenings, has become so widely discussed that it needs no identification.

Roscoe Arbuckle, a comedian of the screen, who has made millions laugh, was host at a party, and one of his guests, a young woman of the screen, died. Arbuckle and his ill-fated guest were from, and of, Hollywood.

A popular photoplay director, one of the most gifted of them all, was murdered under circumstances that aroused public interest--an interest always excited by the mysterious and the unexplainable. Taylor, the director, was a leading worker in Hollywood, and about him fluttered a bevy of our most attractive feminine celebrities of the screen. All of them his neighbors or frequent visitors to the Hollywood community.

What kind of place is this Hollywood? It has been said widely that the license of Babylon is as the Blue Laws in comparison to the customary wickedness of the settlement of screen favorites. Those who live in Hollywood, frightened by the sudden glare of public attention upon their doings, say their beloved colony is but an average suburb, more beautiful and gayer, perhaps. than others, but just as orderly.

And from Hollywood itself the public has turned its examining impulse upon the "movie folk" themselves. What manner of folk are they? Primitive and bad? Or humane and good?

These are questions worthy of answer. And the answer may be worth while only if given dispassionately after careful, exhaustive examination into all the aspects of Hollywood--its secrets as well as its propaganda; its people as well as its activities; its customs as well as its laws.

It is an old saying, "there can be no smoke without a fire." So much smoke has spread from Hollywood during the last four months, surely there must be some fire. But is it a conflagration--or a blaze? Is it fanned from within, as gossip says, or from without, as the people of the films declare?

On this page is presented today the first of a series of articles resulting from careful, painstaking investigation by The New York Herald--investigation conducted in Hollywood itself. Here is the evidence for and against Hollywood; and the evidence for and against its players in the great

comedy-drama that otherwise is called "the movie world."

PART 1 [Brief Tour of 1922 Hollywood]

Every pilgrim with a movie education feels the moment he steps off the train in Los Angeles that he has been cheated. He looks hungrily around for the familiar scenes of his imagination and finds them not. By every right of press agentry and tourist tales he expects to see Charley Chaplin diving between the legs of a small town cop, Douglas Fairbanks doing a headspin and the bathing beauties wiggling their toes in the sand of the neighboring beach, while assorted peons and East Side gunmen sit about in makeup waiting for some one to bellow "Action--camera!" through a megaphone.

But he learns that the studios are far from the city, that the street traffic of ever growing Los Angeles is far too serious a thing to be trifled with by pursuit chasers, and that the nearest beach is a dozen miles away. He approaches his hotel with some hope, for he has been led to believe that all the famous stars not actively engaged on the "lot" or on "location"--the pilgrim has desperately mastered the movie lingo so as to feel at home with the Personages when he meets them--are to be seen draped in the lobby, possibly waiting for the gong to announce the beginning of the orgies.

But all I could see was a number of pinch backed youths with nothing on their minds but the necessity of getting a good seat in the basement cafeteria into which prohibition has converted the men's grill.

In the streets it was to be noted that some of the motion picture theaters were showing films not yet seen in New York. I was told that one of them had recently been advertising a Mary Miles Minter picture with a strip of canvas lettered "I love you--I love you--I love you," this being part of a letter she wrote William Desmond Taylor, the director who was murdered. It occurred to somebody that perhaps this was not very good advertising after all and the strip had been taken down.

It was plain that no movie people, recognizable as such, were to be found in the city proper. They may have been there once, but Iowans have crowded

them out. It is a stock joke that there are more Iowans in Los Angeles than in Iowa, and I half believe it. The reason for the hegira as given me is that Iowa is the only state in which farmers can lay by enough money to retire and go where they want to go.

But it was Hollywood this traveler started out to see, not Los Angeles--Hollywood, the home of the movies, where some kind of a "colony" lived in a beauteous, palm bowered stockade and, not lingering to remove the grease paint of the studios, plunged into orgies the moment the dinner dishes were cleared away by soft footed, incurious Japanese.

I got into a taxicab, noted that the meter registered 30 cents at the start, just as it does in New York, and set forth. Hollywood, it seemed, lay seven miles northwest of the center of Los Angeles. Twenty years ago it had a population of 1,200 persons, living on fine estates separated by lemon and orange orchards. Now it has 70,000. It joined Los Angeles in 1910, and has kept pace with the growth of that astonishing city.

On the way I had the taxicab stop in front of the bungalow court where William Desmond Taylor lived. The bungalow court is, I believe, peculiar to southern California. On a plot of ground about the size of that occupied by a large apartment house in New York a parallelogram is laid out and along three sides one or two story houses are erected, the fourth side being the street. The houses are separated from one another by a space of fifteen feet or more.

Within the central court which all of them face are planted palms, evergreens and shrubbery over a spread of lawn. They are beautiful and attractive places. The true bungalow is one story high.

Taylor's home, a duplicate of all the others on this court, had two stories. He had half the ground floor and half the second floor and another family the other half. Each tenant has his own doorways. It is what is called in the East a two family house. I don't know what rent Taylor paid, but from what I heard of prices elsewhere would guess it was about \$125 a month. Taylor was not a "high liver."

Well, the trip to Hollywood took us up and down the hills of Los Angeles, through streets lined with date and fan palms and streets with palms on one

side and advertising signs on the other, and every so often a monstrous real estate board boasting of the present and piling million on million of population for the future. The reigning sensation in Los Angeles outside the "Taylor case," by the way, was somebody's prediction that the city would have 3,000,000 souls (even the movie people are credited with souls for statistical purposes) by the year 1940, I think it was.

With no more digressions we shall now proceed to Hollywood.

Past automobile service stations almost as neat and alluring as the bungalow courts, past open spaces and green hillsides and rows of deep shading pepper trees, along one of those justly famous California highways, we rode along and came to the gate of movieland.

It wasn't a gate, but a high green wooden fence suddenly appearing behind a file of palms at the left, and mammoth white letters spelling "William Fox Studios." It was like the fence enclosing the fairgrounds in an Eastern county seat, and the letters seemed to rival closely the Colgate sign in Jersey City for size. Above it were to be seen roofs like those of barns and hangars and a silhouetted sierra of timbers and walls, which I later discovered were "sets," the scenery of the movies.

The next block proved to be Fox, too, but the fence and the buildings were of stucco. Then more studios, all shouting their name in big letters--Warner Brothers, Christie Comedies, and others, with blocks of dwellings between. Then a block surrounded by automobiles parked beneath pepper trees and a sign, much smaller than the others I had seen, "Famous Players-Lasky Studios."

The object of this expedition was a survey of the whole town of Hollywood, not the studios, so I kept on. In passing, however, I noted with chagrin that not a Rolls-Royce was to be seen in all the automobile show outside the "Lasky lot." Most of the cars were common tumbrils in fact, and badly in need of a wash, and there weren't nearly as many chauffeurs lolling about as I had hoped. Where were all those glorious vehicles with gold inlay and platinum wheels the press agent had pictured? Here was a solecism to be investigated later.

A friend who is not in the movies transferred me from a taxicab to his plebian car and guided me through residential parts of Hollywood. I wanted to see the homes of all the big actors, but as that would take several days we compromised on a ride ending at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Fairbanks, Beverly Hills.

While passing studios and now while traversing the boulevards I kept on the lookout for persons identifiable as film celebrities, but saw none. Not a star, not an "extra," not a painted face, not a camera, not a director in knee breeches and puttees or otherwise, not even a group of cowboys or a single cowboy sleeping under a tree or rolling marihuana cigarettes while waiting to be called.

All preconceptions wrong. Not a hint or symptom save an occasional studio giving assurance that this is really the Pittsburgh of the motion picture. Nobody hanging around the studios. No one clamoring to get in. Ordinary looking persons walking the streets, and apparently minding their own business. Just a southern California city of the landscaped, well tailored, prosperous looking sort, with a special fineness of situation because it is built along a valley and a slope with a background of hills which Joseph Urban could not improve upon.

Kearny and Fremont, Castro and Pico fought over these hills, and later the terrifying bandits, Tiburcio Vasquez and Joaquin Murrieta, held them. Modern Hollywood, one regrets to say, knows little of the romance caressing it from out of the past or of the ghosts that patrol the Pass. Only one of the many persons from whom I sought this information knew that the heights had not always been called Hollywood Hills. He was a clerk in a bookstore.

My guide rolled me along a well kept asphalt highway, which I think was Santa Monica boulevard, past houses half hidden by palm trees, peppers, and the pungent eucalyptus. The prevailing color is white or cream, varied with blue and pink, with red or green tiled roofs; the favored material is stucco, which does not seem to crack in that climate as it does in the East.

Many of the walks leading to the houses were bordered with geraniums. Rose bushes climb valiantly up wall and trellis, but because of the January

freeze California is sadly lacking in roses this year. The same frost that swatted the citrus crop killed the posies. Down at Santa Ana I heard of an outdoor fete in which artificial flowers had to be used. That is the extreme of desolation in the land of sunshine and flowers.

We passed Swiss chalets, glorified flat roofed Aztec 'dobes, English cottages, Norman castles, Mesopotamian mosques, all kinds of architecture; also plain redwood California bungalows, each with its vines and shrubbery and maybe half a dozen orange trees, laden with golden bulbs.

At the top of a hill to our right stood a great house like a Japanese pagoda, the home of Adolph Bernheimer (not of the pictures), a principal show place of Hollywood. My friend was explaining that most of the people of Hollywood are not connected with motion pictures when he broke off to say: "Wally Reid lives there." The house to which he pointed was below the level of our boulevard. We looked down on a roof of red tile and walls of brown stucco. We could not see the swimming pool, but rapidly obtained the impression that Fred Harvey's desert hotels along the Santa Fe are no niftier than the abiding place of this same Wallace Reid.

Up the road a little piece is the home of William S. Hart, New England colonial, shingled and white, one of the plainest and most agreeable places we saw. We were told that the appropriate thing for tourists to say when they reach this point on the grand tour is: "Just like Bill, isn't it?" On the other side of the boulevard is the mansion of Pauline Frederick, with an expanse of lawn costing a fortune to maintain in California. The house is of stucco, cream tinted, red tiled, formal looking.

The estate of Edward L. Doheny, oil man, penetrates a canyon not far from Miss Frederick's home, but a frieze of eucalyptus hides it from public view. In the same neighborhood Mme. Nazimova has a yellow citadel.

Passing out of Hollywood without my knowing it we were in Beverly Hills. Its general tone is like that of the highest priced parts of Great Neck, Long Island, of Upper Mountain avenue, in Montclair, N.J. It is all private residences except the Beverly Hills Hotel, where, I was told, Rupert Hughes and some of the picture stars lived and spent their leisure in riding, golf

and contemplation of La Brea fields, the enfolding mountains and the Pacific flashing eight miles away. Charles Ray has a tidy thatched roof, box hedged English cottage in Beverly Hills. Will Rogers is bringing up his three children in a rambling home near by and sticking close to his swimming pool when in California. But every little while he has to leave the pool and go dripping to the front gate to say, "Yes, they live right up that road," to tourists before they have a chance to tell him that they are looking for the place where Doug and Mary live. Homespun Will Rogers, strange to say, has a tremendous house, with an acre or so of pillared porch and no end of formal gardening and all that.

The road up the hill to the Fairbanks-Pickford house is nothing to brag of. It is a steep mountain grade, wide enough for only one car, and paved at one time, full of potholes. The tradition is that Mr. Fairbanks had the holes dung in order to discourage trippers. They flock up the hill, roll on the lawn and snapshot everything. One especially numerous flock of them gathered on the lawn one afternoon just after the two stars returned from their honeymoon. They shouted "Speech, speech!"

"Good heavens, what shall we do?" said Doug. "Do?" said Mary. "We'll go out and speak to them, of course."

So they went out and quelled the multitude with speech and were snapshotted and sent everybody away happy.

Back of all these are other estates projecting their flora, like green spearheads, up the lower slopes of the hills. Many of these are owned by well to do Eastern families that have gone to California to live. The same is true of many of the largest homes in Hollywood itself. There is no "movie colony." Here and there a few actors may be found living side by side, some of them, the best of them, in bungalows renting at from \$60 to \$125 a month, but as a rule they rub elbows with storekeepers, artists, bankers, insurance agents, owners of Los Angeles factories, retired sea captains, health seekers, brokers, bankers--with probably a healthy admixture of pirates and the clergy--just such people as may be found in any desirable suburb.

Many Hollywood people work in Los Angeles and motor back and forth. Even

the lowliest have cars in California. Not many of the lowliest live in Hollywood, for it is regarded as "an expensive place," although real estate prices are well below those of comparable towns around New York. The great unheard of, unpress-agented majority who make their living at the picture studios cannot afford a residence in Hollywood. A furnished room in Los Angeles is the home of not a few. A Hollywood acquaintance told me that of all the families on his block, along both sides of the street, his was the only one that had any member working at the studios. This may be an exceptional case, but it is obvious that the movies have not taken possession of all of Hollywood. One well known star, I think it was Guy Bates Post, told me he lived near Pasadena and drove twenty miles to his job every morning and back at night.

The Hollywood Chamber of Commerce estimates that 30,000 of the town's 70,000 persons are in one or another branch of the film industry. But an old timer said the truth was that while about 30,000 were actually engaged in the industry, not more than one-half of them, if that, lived in Hollywood.

Some of the gilt edged performers have habitations accurately described by the real estaters as palatial, others occupy modest houses in rows that, save for the tropical foliage, are about like Flatbush.

Charley Chaplin rents a Moorish dwelling of about a dozen rooms on Corotona Heights from a theosophist for \$500 a month; J.M. Kerrigan has a while clapboarded one story bungalow; Kathryn MacDonald a severe Dutch colonial cottage; Sessue Hayakawa, the Japanese, a formidable feudal castle; Dustin Farnum a two story chalet; William Desmond a homey colonial; Tom Mix a chalet; Tom Moore an Aztec palace. In Hollywood, as everywhere, each to his own taste.

After firing one guide I acquired another and conscientiously did the business district of Hollywood. This is divided into three parts along a mile and a half of Hollywood boulevard. Originally there were three drowsing hamlets, and when the boom came they all spurted together and began to grow toward one another, so that eventually they will be as one and the pleasant interstices now filled with vestigial orange trees will disappear.

The brightness and cleanness of the business blocks strike the eye of the visitor from the East. They are not old enough to be anything else, and the town having no factories to speak of, there is nothing to smudge them. The buildings are of one or two story, except one which has five stories, and a skyscraper, now being completed, which has six. They are of stucco, concrete or pressed brick, uniformly white or cream colored. The stores are modern looking and cheering places to go into.

Real estate offices are notable for numbers. You learn that twenty years ago orchard land in what is now the costliest part of Hollywood could be had at from \$250 to \$500 an acre. Sixteen years ago the Hollywood Trust & Security Savings Bank bought one of the best corners on the main street, a plot 105 by 60 feet, for \$37,500. It is now appraised at \$187,000. Ordinary space along the street is worth \$1,500 a front foot.

Homes do not come so high. Here are samples: Furnished five room bungalow, hardwood floor, garage, water, adults only, \$80 a month; four room bungalow, corner, telephone, disappearing bed, garage, \$75; "lovely sunny corner room," \$25; two rooms and sun parlor, telephone, \$65; unfurnished six room flat, two baths, garage, \$90; seven room house, all improvements, \$100; for sale, plastered bungalow, Spanish, five rooms, unpaved, \$8,000; Spanish home, five rooms, garage, brick chimney, lawn, shrubbery, \$5,900; five room stucco bungalow, tiled roof, \$7,500; plot 160 by 190, site for home for flats, \$12,600; site for court or apartment, 88 by 138, \$8,700; restricted lot, \$3,000; rentals, furnished, \$80, \$125, \$150; rentals, unfurnished, \$55, \$65, \$75, \$90.

Though disappointed in Los Angeles and in the vicinity of such motion picture studios as I had seen, I still entertained a hope that an actor or two would be seen behaving roguishly in the marts of Hollywood.

It was not to be. There were a few sporty looking automobiles, go-devils with port holes in the hood, but they stood parked and empty in front of banks and grocery stores. I had been told to approach the Hollywood Hotel with caution, as here was the center not only of the weird night life of the "movie colony," but anything was likely to happen to a diffident stranger in the

daytime. They told me it was Passion's Playground. It proved to be a three story mission style hospice, screened from the street by the regulation palms, peppers and acacias, and built around a patio rich with tropical vegetation. Several Iowa grandmothers with neatly parted white hair were knitting in alcoves of the big sitting room lobby. Stepping close for an earful of scandal, I heard nothing but a debate as to the relative merits of the Santa Fe and the Union Pacific as a means of migration.

Two Japanese bellboys had an air of knowing something, but I got no more out of them than they out of me, which was 25 cents for service. Otherwise the hotel was in a state of siesta, and so it continued to be all the time I was in Hollywood.

The new guide suggested Armstrong & Carlton's for luncheon.

"You'll see them all there," he said. This is the great nooning place of Hollywood, although there are several other restaurants and a self-service refectory which spells itself on the sign, "Cafateria." We went to a corner table. Armstrong & Carlton's was full of wavy haired young men and of girls reminiscent of the side streets above Forty-Second Street, New York. But the guide, who is a studio veteran and really knows his crowd, had to confess that this seemed to be an off day.

"Let's see," he said. "There's Al Green, Tommy Meighan's director, over in that corner. That gray haired man is Bill Conklin, who plays heavies, but is socially acquainted with the elect of Los Angeles. The lady under the big hat is Alice Terry, who started in the pictures as a Triangle extra and earned a living cutting film between jobs. And that's all, so far as I can see. The rest are tourists, I guess. Anyway, studio people having luncheon are just like other people."

With this assurance I left the restaurant to find out more about Hollywood and was pained to learn that it has only one all night restaurant and that a stool and counter affair. The Cocanut Grove at the Ambassador, roadhouses and dance halls along the oceangoing highways, plenty of places of entertainment there are, but of these we shall write about later; they are not in Hollywood, though they have to do with it.

There have been sixty-seven studios listed at one time, but closing of a good many of them, due to the financial slump and other causes, has reduced the number to between forty and fifty. Hollywood has more of them than any other district, but those within the fifteen square miles that constitute the Hollywood area are not segregated and those outside of Hollywood are as much as twenty miles apart.

There are now twenty-two studios in Hollywood proper, others at Culver City, five miles nearer the ocean; Universal City, several miles beyond Hollywood to the northwest, and elsewhere in the region bordering on Los Angeles and between the Santa Monica mountains and the Pacific.

Of the studios I shall write in another article. The purpose here is to give a superficial view of Hollywood, the suburb.

Former Californians remember the Hollywood of twenty years ago as a small, "exclusive residential district," populated by a handful of retired Easterners living in handsome homes in the midst of citrus orchards. Its character was about like that, say of Bernardsville, N.J. Los Angeles was a city of little more than 100,000. It had already started to boom when the movies came.

G.M. Anderson--Broncho Billy--appeared from somewhere and began shooting "Westerns" requiring no studio. Col. William N. Selig is credited with having built the first studio, at Edendale. Then came the Biograph and others, one at a time. They found in this part of California not only the greatest number of sunlit days and the best actinic light value, but the greatest variety of "locations" to be discovered anywhere. There were prairie, desert, ranches, rocky and sandy beaches, gorges, mountains, snow, gardens, vegetation of every clime, romantic villages, bustling cities, all within a small geographical compass.

In the center of all this, Hollywood, conveniently placed between the mountains and the sea, far enough from Los Angeles to be out of the highest rent zone, afforded plenty of vacant space for the erection of studios. At first each producer of pictures had his own independent personnel. For example, each company making wild West films had its own army of cowboys. Each

outfit was jealous of the other, and as no producing company can be busy all the time, there was time for dissipation, wrangling, sometimes serious brawls.

Since then the cowboy market has been virtually cornered by two women. When a producer needs a ranch crowd, he telephones the women for them. When the cowboy scenes are finished these men are paid off. They return to headquarters and wait for an assignment to some other studio.

There is a fascinating story in the handling of the "extra people," the thousands who work in the pictures itinerantly, in mob scenes and the like, but it can only be indicated here. The point is that the character of the "movie industry" is changing just as Hollywood is changing and has changed since the days when the first orange orchards were cut up into bungalow lots.

The first studios were makeshifts. Nobody knew how the business and art of the cinema would develop, or whether it would develop at all. Eventually there arose permanent studios of concrete and steel and the industry acquired a feeling of solidity. The rush to Hollywood became a stampede.

Rob Wagner, biographer of the movies, estimates that for every star 200 other persons are needed to assist his light in shining before men. The crowd came and it sought homes. Transients, finding themselves settled for long sojourns in California, bought or built houses. The trooper, always a nomad, dreaming of a fixed habitation, found his dream coming true. In California he could literally have his own vine and fig tree. He could be sure to seeking his family every day.

There sprung up a feeling of local pride. The actor and his retinue, the director, the scenario writer, the host of others who help to make the pictures came to have a love for Hollywood because it was "their town." Proudly they voted, became bank depositors, went on boards of directors. They even joined the churches, with which some persons will be astonished to learn Hollywood is plentifully supplied.

All this makes Hollywood, in its most interesting aspect, a social phenomenon. Hollywood is the gypsy settling down.

The recent scandals have endangered the livelihood of these men and women. In defending Hollywood against attack they have acted from mingled

motives of self interest, of a belief that the black sheep are few, and of local pride.

In another article an attempt will be made to give the facts and to estimate the soundness of the defense.

NEXT ISSUE:

"The Truth About Hollywood":

Part 2 [Drugs, Alcohol and Sexual Morality]

Part 3 [What Happens to a New Girl in Hollywood?]

Part 4 [Brief Tour of Some Hollywood Studios]

NOTES:

[1] See "A Cast of Killers" p. 67.

[2] That interview was reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY #6.

[3] Examination of library microfilm of the Los Angeles Examiner for this period has failed to locate any interview wherein this statement is made by Minter. If anyone has a copy, please forward it to us and it will be reprinted here. Similarly, if anyone knows of any later published interviews given by Charlotte Shelby, please let us know.

[4] The District Attorney's office was attempting to locate the bullet which had been fired by Minter in 1920, when the Shelby family was living at 56 Fremont in Los Angeles. If the bullet could be found and shown to have been fired from the same gun as the bullet which killed Taylor, this would have been the physical evidence needed to link Shelby with the killing.

[5] Shelby's mother was Julia Branch Miles, not Mary Miles.

[6] Obviously a reference to Mabel Normand.

[7] This interview was given after her diaries had been subpoenaed.

[8] The producer is obviously Mack Sennett, the actress is Mabel Normand. In his autobiography, "King of Comedy," Sennett says he spent the night at producer Thomas Ince's house on the night Taylor was killed.

[9] Mabel Normand achieved stardom working for Mack Sennett in 1913-1917, then

went to Goldwyn during 1917-1920. She returned to Sennett in 1921 but it is very doubtful that their personal relationship resumed.

[10] Some of the details of that quarrel were related by Taylor's chauffeur. See "William Desmond Taylor: A Dossier," p. 255.

[11] The rumor that she had visited the Taylor home at midnight on the day of the slaying, was strongly denied by Edna Purviance, and the rumor appears to be false.

[12] This "famed foreign actress" is clearly Alla Nazimova.

[13] This "recently divorced" couple is clearly Rudolph Valentino and Jean Acker. He had recently skyrocketed to fame in "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse" and "The Sheik".

[14] Smith does not mention that Natacha Rambova, who would become Valentino's next wife, was also in the car.

[15] Mack Sennett and Mabel Normand. See Taylorology #8.

[16] Again, clearly the reference is to Mabel Normand.

[17] If the incident is genuine, it is possibly a reference to Juanita Hansen, who later wrote extensively about her drug addiction in Hollywood.

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.uno.edu/~drif/arbuckle/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>

For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 13 -- January 1994 Editor: Bruce Long *
* All reprinted material is in the public domain *

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"The Truth About Hollywood":

Part 2 [Drugs, Alcohol and Sexual Morality]

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What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

The graphic images mentioned in the previous issue of TAYLOROLOGY are temporarily available on the gopher server at PI.LA.ASU.EDU port 70 in the directory

Internet Sampler

Selected Electronic Newsletters

Taylorology

Graphic Image Files for Taylorolgy

The files are in Encapsulated PostScript format (Macintosh).

March 19-April 2, 1922

Thoreau Cronyn

NEW YORK HERALD

"The Truth About Hollywood", Continued

PART II [Drugs, Alcohol and Sexual Morality]

It ought to be possible to write sanely about the morals of Hollywood. It will be well to keep in mind the purpose of the slightly bewildered but resolute statesman who said "I will go to the end of the road, let the chips fall where they may." Recollection of the well known limerick may also be useful:

"Said the Reverend Jabez McCotton,
'The waltz of the Devil's begotten.'
Said Jones to Miss Blye,
'Don't you mind the old guy;
To the pure almost everything's rotten.' "

I went to Hollywood, to find out the truth, good and band. I talked with actors, directors, producers, screen writers, extras, merchants, doctors, ministers, bankers, detectives, performers, extollers, denouncers, newspaper men and women, publicity men, housewives, onlookers, lenders, spenders and others of high and low degree and varying standards of veracity. I sat with the heads of official agencies investigating the Taylor murder, the traffic in narcotics and bootleggers. I watched movie people at their work and their frolics. I went without instructions except to get the facts and without other attitude except that of reporter.

In the minds of many persons who have read of the "Arbuckle party" in San Francisco and the Taylor murder in Los Angeles there has been created this picture:

Hollywood, the motion picture capital; a community of dissolute actors and actresses and others of the movie industry; the worst of them unspeakably

vile, the best suspicionable; a colony of unregenerates and narcotic addicts; given to wild night parties commonly known as 'orgies'; heroes of the screen by day and vicious roisterers by night; a section of civilization gone rottenly to smash.

For comparison to the profligacy of Hollywood the critics go back to Tyre and Sidon and Rome; to Alexandria, Herculaneum and Pompeii, to the later Caesars, to Nero and Caligula; to the Herodian courts of Judea; to Belshazzar and Alexander. The sorriest historical procession is conjured.

Hollywood, which had never thought of itself in quite that light, laughs merrily at first, as the accusation is echoed back from the East. Then, compelled to believe that a considerable part of the public is taking the indictment seriously, it soberly sets about preparing its defense.

What is the evidence as to "orgies," narcotics, alcohol, vice, extravagant living? I shall tell in sequence whatever I was able to find out. But just before the plunge the heartening fact comes to mind that a little while ago the residents of Beverly Hills assembled to discuss the laying out of a polo field. Beverly Hills is part of the "Hollywood district," an "exclusive" part, where Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford, Charles Ray, Will Rogers and many other stars live in sequestered comfort. When it was Rogers' turn to speak he said:

"Folks, I've sort o' been looking over this corner of the world, and it does look as if there are some mighty pretty places for a polo outfit. But I also noticed another thing, and that is there is no church in Beverly Hills. Now, it probably would do my kids and me a lot of good to dress up and get out and play polo, but I figure it would be just as well if we attended to this church business first. I move you, Mr. Chairman, that we go ahead and raise the money, but spend it on a church instead of a polo field. I can chip in \$500, if that's agreeable to you all." And those motion picture people gave a whoop at the brilliancy of Will Rogers' suggestion, and as soon as the architect gets his plans drawn that church will begin to materialize.

There is some truth in the stories of wild "parties" in and about Hollywood. Those who have attended them contend that they have been no worse

than similar things indulged in by persons of the same moral stripe in other parts of the country, notably New York. But of such stupidly disgusting conduct I never have heard. These "parties" virtually ceased after the Arbuckle affair in San Francisco. Their participants were a relatively small number of men and women, members of overlapping circles of movie parasites and occasionally a real star. The leading figure in several of them was a comedian, not now active, who mentally and morally never has risen above his low beginnings. His popularity with the public enabled him to earn a great deal of money. He spent it as such a man might be expected to spend it. He was generous and acquired a reputation in his set as a prince of hosts. A flock of flatterers gathered around to help him get rid of his salary. He gave party after party of the same general type, some of them reaching their climax in everybody getting drunk, some going indescribably further.

An investigator whose word I have no reason to doubt told me he had definite evidence of four of the more extreme parties. Three of them were staged in Los Angeles hotels, the fourth in a private residence in Hollywood. The first one brought together ten men and ten women. Some of them were drug addicts. Liquor was provided by the host for everybody, and morphine and cocaine, with hypodermic syringes, for those who craved them.

The second "party" of this type was held, the investigator told me, in the Hollywood home of an actor. It lacked one bad feature, but included all the others, and in addition some of the more intoxicated revelers disrobed as they danced. This was a large gathering--more than 100 persons. Nearly all were disreputable and so regarded by the others of the Hollywood community. The third and fourth entertainments were not essentially different from the others.

The same investigator told me there had been bathing parties on the beaches at which some of the "ladies and gentlemen" who had forgotten to bring their bathing suits were not prevented from going into the water comfortably. I have heard of a similar exhibition not twenty miles from New York.

Scandalous stories may be heard in Hollywood and Los Angeles by any one who cares to listen. On this trip it was my duty to listen, but I do not

present on this page as a fact anything which is merely hearsay. One of the stories I had read pictured a handsome and popular film actor as puncturing himself in the stomach with a hypodermic needle at the peak of an exciting dinner attended by "stars" and crying "This is the life." Most of the persons I met had never heard of this incident, although some of them believed the actor in question was a morphine user. [1]

The only person I found who professed to know the truth of this tale was a newspaper man. He said he had attended the party and had seen the incident. But a veteran of Hollywood who has watched the stars blaze up and die down and has kept pretty close watch on them and their habits said to me: "I wish you'd tell me who this newspaper man is and I'll find him and tell him that he's not only a liar but a blank-blank one."

It may be mentioned here that I met in Hollywood several friends whom I had known for years. They are in the best position to know what is going on. They are the sort of men who, despite their connection with the picture industry--or art--might be expected to tell me confidentially whatever secrets of public interest they knew, just as I would tell them if they came to New York.

But the fact is that these learned and agreeable gossips did not believe one-thousandth part of the stories in circulation and were ready to fight at the drop of the bat to demonstrate the falsity of these tales. Their solicitude lest I should prove gullible was touching. And some of the dark mysteries of Hollywood that I had occasion to ask them about they had never heard of at all. They told me so, and I believe them.

Now as to drugs, are they in common use in Hollywood? No. I looked into this question with special care and learned:

The larger cities of California are cursed with an extraordinary number of peddlers of opium, heroin, morphine and cocaine. The Chinese brought the first opium to the West coast, and many Californians acquired the habit from them before the East heard of it and before alkaloids were used at all. Drugs are smuggled into San Pedro, the port of Los Angeles, by Japanese, Chinese, British and other vessels. They also come over the border from Mexico and

down from British Columbia and the northwestern ports of the United States. Much of it also is manufactured in Philadelphia and St. Louis, exported to Mexico in ostensibly legitimate traffic and smuggled back to the United States.

The Government and State anti-narcotic agents are absurdly inadequate in numbers. The Government did not have any agents in Los Angeles specially assigned to this work until two months ago, when two were sent from the East. Their investigations included an order to look into reports that drugs were being sold at motion picture studios. These agents have been trying to get evidence of "snow parties" as the gatherings of drug addicts are called, in Hollywood and Los Angeles, but have not yet succeeded. "Snow" is the modern underworld name for cocaine. Addicts speak of taking a "sleigh ride." The only actress to whose door the Federal men have traced forbidden drugs is not in the pictures but in vaudeville. They thought they had a good clew when told of a railroad conductor who had been invited to attend a "snow party" at the home of the director of a low grade movie company in Hollywood. The conductor went to the party in his ordinary Sunday clothes. He found the other guests and the host in pajamas. They tore off his collar and coat, but when he said that was enough they let him alone.

There were plenty of opium and pipes in the house, and a Chinese was "cooking" for the smokers. None of them was a movie headliner. The conductor was not interested in things. He went upstairs and won \$600 in a poker game.

"There really are a good many drug addicts in the motion picture crowd," an agent of the Department of Justice told me, "but most of them are among the low class, roustabout actors, and the extra people who are not working steadily but call themselves actors. However, the stories have been wildly exaggerated. And don't forget, young man, that New York has its dope fiends, too."

A good many "extras" have been arrested as addicts at the instance of the California State Board of Pharmacy. A few years ago an officer of the Department of Internal Revenue having said there were 8,000 addicts in Los Angeles a narcotic clinic was established and maintained for a year, but the

largest number of patients registered at one time was 300. A peddler arrested by the State board said he had sold cocaine to one of the fairest and most prosperous of screen actresses. No one else has accused her.

The Los Angeles police have two detectives on the narcotic detail. One of them, who appeared to me both honest and intelligent, told me that not one in fifty of the city's addicts lived or worked in Hollywood. He also told me of a high salaried, dashing movie star who reported to the police that a peddler was stealing the stuff that dreams are made of into one of the finest Hollywood studios. The star and his valet helped the police set a trap for the peddler and catch him. This recital was hugely interesting to me for on the preceding day I had been assured that this same star was himself an addict and his abdomen pitted with needle marks.

Some of the studio managements have paid no attention to rumors that drugs were being sold on or about their premises. Others are alive to this danger. One studio gave the police the address and telephone number of a woman listed as an "extra." She was sent to jail as a peddler of cocaine. She had been a cabaret entertainer and had done "bits" in pictures from time to time.

"She claimed to be an important actress, but was a bum," was my detective's appraisal.

A tip from the wife of a scenario writer enabled the police to round up a coterie of peddlers in a Los Angeles poolroom. A year and a half ago the Universal studio caused the arrest of a dispenser of morphine. He had hung around the studio, caught on as an "extra" and the moment he got past the gate began looking for customers among his fellows of the small fry. He went to jail and his wife divorced him.

Cocaine is sold in Los Angeles in "bindles." A "bindle" is done up in waxed tissue, just like a drug store powder, weighs from two to two and a half grains and sells for \$2 or \$2.50. Some of the peddlers work on commission--50 cents a bindle--others buy their stock outright from the wholesaler. In their unwritten code "eight pieces of iron" or of candy means eight ounces of cocaine or morphine, and "harmonica" is heroin.

"Stories of 'snow parties' in Hollywood are vague. People call us up but don't give names or addresses. Personally I think all the 'dope' about 'dope' is exaggerated. It's the Mexicans and negroes who bother us, not the movie folk. A while ago we thought we had a good one when we heard of 'snow parties' in an old country house in Hollywood which had been rented to a count and sublet to others. The stars were supposed to gather there every night and have a 'sniff' or two. We spent three or four nights around the house. There were parties there, but it was only a mess of bootleggers."

In certain published accounts of high jinks in Hollywood marijuana is mentioned as one of the drugs consumed by the insatiate performers. Marijuana is Indian hemp, sometimes called Mexican weed. It grows wild over much of the Southwest as ragweed, which it resembles, does in the East. Its seed is sold for birdseed. If the Californian has no back yard he can buy a quarter of an ounce of birdseed and raise enough marijuana in a window box to inspire a thousand bandits. The Mexicans mix the dried leaves with tobacco and smoke them in cigarettes. The effect is inflammatory stimulation.

The marijuana excites the nerves, deadens fear, turns a coward into a swashbuckler, accentuates evil propensities. It does not soothe or produce pleasant dreams, and is scorned by the whites. Some cowboys have picked up the habit from the Mexicans, and whatever use is made of marijuana in Hollywood is restricted to punchers and peons.

Before leaving the subject of drugs it should be pointed out that no prominent motion picture actor or actress has ever been arrested as an addict so far as I know. This merely is worth passing mention. The ready, of course, knows that addicts who are well up in the social or professional scale are seldom arrested anywhere. Does any one recall such an arrest in New York? Of much greater significance is the fact that even in the "inside" gossip of the California movie zone the number of well known players suspected of addiction is very small. Wherever I went I asked, "Who are these dope fiends we've been reading about?" Of the names given me by more than two persons the public would recognize only five. One of these was that of the handsome matinee idol heretofore mentioned. The others were women. There are in the

Hollywood district when the studios are booming, which is not the case now, about 3,000 professional actors more or less regularly engaged, in addition to a swarm of extras. About 100 of these are stars or featured performers whose names sparkle in electric lights everywhere. Only five of the 100 were seriously mentioned as addicts even by lovers of scandal, and the only one concerning whom first hand testimony was offered was that of the screen hero said to have been seen jabbing himself with a needle.

I admit that I was an outsider in Hollywood but I do not believe that any "dope cult" exists among the well known players, and am sure that the great majority of them have the same horror of narcotic drugs as other normal beings. And, by the way, it seems to be pretty well established that William Desmond Taylor, the director who was murdered, was not only trying to get a famous actress to give up morphine but was fighting a group of peddlers who were smuggling drugs into one of the Hollywood studio inclosures. He had caused one of the peddlers to be beaten almost to death at this studio. Most of the drug users are among the low grade extras, certain small comedy companies and a gunman type of hired hand. There has been until recently no concerted effort of the producing managements to stamp out the traffic.

I was told by the Los Angeles police that such an effort now is under way. I might add here that a Hollywood physician who gave me a closeup view of the community as he saw it said that within the past year he had encountered only three addicts. Two were girls, both "extras." The other was a man, a relative of an actor. The Rev. Neal Dodd, an Episcopalian pastor, who is a sort of movie chaplain and is to have charge of a Little Church Around the Corner to be built in Hollywood, said he personally knew of only one "dope case" involving an actor.

So much for narcotic drugs. Next alcohol. This topic can be dismissed with a few words. California under prohibition is one of the wettest States. Liquor easily is procurable in every large community, including Hollywood. In parts of Los Angeles it is sold openly, notably at soft drink counters. It cannot be bought openly anywhere in Hollywood, which always has been a saloonless town and is now. An old timer said to me, "My daughter, 15 years old

has never seen a drunken person."

The homes of Hollywood are stocked with liquor in about the same proportion as elsewhere. Every thirsty burgher has his list of bootleggers' telephone numbers. He swaps telephone lists with his neighbor, just as he used to trade home brew recipes. He phones his order to the bootlegger and the stuff is delivered at the back door. The prevailing poison is synthetic gin at \$8 a quart. There also is California wine to be had in any quantity, prohibition having at least doubled the price of the grape growers' product. Grapes may be bought in season by the pound or the ton. Unfermented grape juice is sold by the three gallon jar for \$5 the jar, I believe. A friend told me that three parts of water added to the juice produced, after an interval and without any attention whatever, the rarest burgundy. How this exciting mutation is accomplished I don't know, but that is what he said. There is much drinking in Hollywood. Most of it is in the homes of movie and non-movie residents. Many homes are abstemious. Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford are among the abstainers. They serve no liquor in their home except at formal dinners.

An alcoholic cross section of Hollywood presents no phenomena not to be found nowadays in other communities East and West, with this exception: My impression is that movie people, taken collectively, have in the past given and attended more "booze parties" than most other communities of the same size, and that reckless indulgence has been more frequent. Hollywood probably will dispute this. Anyway, we can agree that since the Arbuckle explosion there has been a slowing up all around.

Another count made against Hollywood is that girls who try to enter the movies or to advance in their profession are subject to the moods of unscrupulous directors and even of "magnates." I asked one of the best informed and frankest of men what truth there was in this.

"I'll tell you," he said, "how the motion pictures got a bad name. They have come up, you know, rather chaotically, from nothing in a few years. A few years ago the stock company was dominant. It put on cheap pictures costing from \$5,000 to \$25,000, and ground out a picture in two or three weeks. Each

studio had a large number of employees earning from \$5 to \$150 a week. Sometimes there were as many as twenty-five directors in one studio. The profession of director was a new one. Some of these were men of bad character but with a knack for this game. They got into the habit of telling actresses that in order to become better actresses they needed emotional experience. The next suggestion was, of course, that the director could help supply this experience.

"I know of girls who were tricked by this sort of fraud, and the truth is that some of them really did become stars. But as the new type of picture developed the stock company passed. The director no longer is all powerful. In the next phase the little tin king was the star. He picked his own company. If he were a rotter, as some stars have been, he selected his women according to their complaisance, and it is only fair to say that some of them were exceedingly complaisant and evidently came to Hollywood with the intention of throwing themselves at the first man they met who could give them rank in the studios.

"Now that phase is passing or has passed. A new functionary, the casting director, has appeared. In the selection of the cast he is supreme. He has nothing to do with the players before the camera. He merely selects them. He stays in his office. In most of the studios he is a fine type of man. The director on the lot must use a woman in the role to which the casting director assigns her. In the course of a year an actress may work under a number of different directors. No one of them has dictatorial power over her.

"And the caliber of the directors is improving all the time. My judgment is that at the present time if a girl at the studios is led astray it is likely to be her own fault. You will hear the opposite view expressed, but do not ignore the fact that many a girl who went to Hollywood to make her fortune as a star and has had to go home because she has no talent has, to save her face in her home town, told the neighbors that she fled that awful Hollywood rather than submit to a wicked director.

"There is no question that some of the well known stage people who were brought here a few years ago 'raised the deuce.' They could not get over the

idea that Hollywood either was a one night stand or a pleasure resort with the sky as the limit. The natives, watching their carrying on, exclaimed: 'So these are actors! God save the mark!' The 'joy rider,' the profligate fool, always is under observation, while the silent, decorous majority is ignored. Well, the irresponsible director and the small minded actor were what gave the motion pictures a bad name in southern California. But I have watched Hollywood a long time, and am convinced that it is steadily improving, despite these occasional wild splurges we read about. Most of the bad ones were bad when they came here.

"The bad ones flock together as affinities do everywhere. Every experienced observer knows the source of the trouble that recently has come upon Hollywood. One of the comedy concerns is rotten and ought to be blotted off the face of the map. But the estimate that not 200 members of the 'fast crowd' are actors, actresses, or directors is accurate. No census has been taken, but I should say there are about 3,000 actors in the studio district. I mean stars, leads and those who play small parts. The extras are as the sands of the sea and many of them just as shifty. In boom times they gather around, in slack times they go back to the foundry or wherever they came from. The body from which the working extras are drawn numbers from 8,000 to 15,000 persons. About 150 of them are ex-pugilists. When the studios are busy they work as rubbers and extras; otherwise they are absorbed in the mass. Living is somehow easy for their kind.

"Among the extras are many decent and thrifty souls as well as many weak and shiftless. They are just such humanity as you might think would be attracted to the pictures. For a period of twenty months I carefully checked all the newspaper stories of 'movie actresses' arrested for misdemeanors. Often they were headlined as 'movie stars.' The fact was that not one of them was even a player of small parts. They were comedy girls and extra girls. When arrested, all said they were actresses."

While in Hollywood I also looked into the matter of divorce and informal alliances. A long list of conspicuous players who have not been divorced and who have no intention of being so was recited. A very able man who in the past

had been a police reporter in New York and other cities as well as smaller towns testified that there was the least open immorality in Hollywood of any place he had known. Another observer thought there was a greater percentage of couples living together without being married than he had found to be the case elsewhere, except, possibly, in New York. But as apparently everybody in the picture fraternity knows who these couples are, this situation would seem to be exceptional in Hollywood, as elsewhere.

A certain director who has had a succession of women friends devoted to him is notorious because of that fact and is avoided by some of his former friends. In the better circles of moviedom he does not show his face. On the other hand, an actor and an actress who make no secret of being more than friends are received socially because they are rated as "on the level." They are introduced at parties by their individual names, and no questions are asked. Liberal as may seem the social code of a community which regards the other fellow's private affairs as strictly his own business, it does not countenance disloyalty in the common law relations.

A woman succeeded in driving out of Hollywood a man who had cast aside a friend of hers. A baby came to another pair, who were married after one of them had secured a necessary divorce. The mother, who had not been a Puritan, not only gave up drinking and profanity, but began giving humorous curtain lectures to her friends who came to the house. She told them she was not going to have her baby associating with "wild women." With the help of the baby, she bettered the standards of propriety throughout her social circle.

Even those who accuse Hollywood of being a "Roaring Camp" must admit that it has its little "Lucks" as well as its "Sals," and when the recording angel gets around to the movie town will he not remember them.

The divorce register of Hollywood is formidably long, but the divorce center of the United States, as a certain author pointed out, is in the Middle West, not California. At the risk of offending stage people it must be said that they seem to be more generally tolerant of divorce than others. That is the case among the motion picture people. The average view is that divorce is an evil but not necessarily a stigma.

If two persons can't get along together they are not criticized for the act of separation. All depends on the circumstances. Divorce rarely is questioned in Hollywood except when one or the other of the persons involved is believed to have been badly treated. The most notable example of players who have been divorced and remarried are Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford. In Hollywood one hears no breath of scandal concerning them. They had their reasons for doing what they did; they are deeply in love with each other, they behave themselves and that ends it. This is the Hollywood view.

One wonders to what extent Hollywood realizes how strange its notions seem to the "good church people," or to small town people generally, who constitute most of the audiences in motion picture theaters. I heard of a small town, old fashioned, old lace and lavender mother who visited a relative in Hollywood. The relative asked her what she'd like to see. "I do not want to see Mary Pickford," she said emphatically. "There's been so much in the papers about her divorce!" And yet many good people of Hollywood look up to Mary not only as a leader of their profession, but all that a woman should be. In the face of such conflict of views, you see, it is not the easiest thing in the world to judge "the motion picture capital."

The whole roster of ten players under salary as Goldwyn stars was shown me and I was told that not one of them had been divorced. I have no reason to question this, and believe the news should be spread, broadcast to counteract an impression that nobody in Hollywood knows today who his wife will be tomorrow.

I was not much interested in the divorce problem of Hollywood, for there and everywhere it is too deep for me, but for the information of any readers who may want to know just who's who, the following list is submitted:

Divorced and not married again: Jean Acker, Mary Allen, Agnes Ayres, Gladys Brockwell, Carlyle Blackwell, Genevieve Blinn, Sylvia Breamer, Herbert Brenon, Lawson Butte, Mae Busch, Barbara Castleton, Charlie Chaplin, Marguerite Clayton, Lew Cody (three times), Jack Conway, Donald Crisp, Kathlyn Clifford, Dorothy Dalton, Allan Dwan, Elliott Dexter, Marie Doro, June Elvidge, Bessie Eyton, Adele Farrington, Casson Ferguson, Maude Fealy, Fred

Fishbeck, Marguerita Fisher, Ann Forrest, Louise Glaum, Edna Goodrich, Winifred Greenwood, Kenneth Harlan, Mildred Harris, Helen Holmes, E. Mason Hopper, Jacques Jaccard, Dick Jones, Anna Lehr, Elmo Lincoln, Ann Little, Katherine MacDonald, Marguerite Marsh, Christine Mayo, Harry Hillard, Jack Mower, Anna Q. Nilsson, Marshall Neilan, Jane Novak, Doris Pawn, Irene Rich, Ruth Roland, Alma Rubens, William Russell, Ford Sterling, Nell Shipman, Ruth Stonehouse, Gloria Swanson, Myrtle Stedman, Hugh Thompson, Mary Thurman, Lawrence Trimble, Rodolph Valentino, Lillian Walker, Pearl White, Marjorie Wilson, Clara Kimball Young, James Young (three times).

Divorced and married again: May Allison, Leah Baird, Reginald Barker, Frank Beal, Lawson Butt, George Beban, Noah Beery, Wallace Beery, Richard Bennett, Francelia Billington, Hobart Bosworth, Bert Bracken, Hazel Daly, Hampton Del Ruth, Ruby De Remer, Jack Dillon, William Edson Duncan, J. Gordon Edwards, Robert Ellison, John Emerson (now married to Anita Loos), Douglas Fairbanks, Franklyn Farnum, Eugene Ford, Allan Forrest (now married to Lottie Pickford), Pauline Frederick (now married to a schooldays sweetheart), Fred Granvill, Bert Grasby, Jack Gilbert, Hale Hamilton, James W. Horne, Louise Huff, Irene Hunt, Paul G. Hurst, Peggy Hyland, Rex Ingram (now married to Alice Terry), Thomas Jefferson, Emery Johnson, Leatrice Joy, Alice Joyce, James Kirkwood, George Larkin, Edward Le Saint, Wilfred Lucas, John M. McGowan, J. Farrell McDonald, Frank Mayo, Harry Millarde, Tom Mix, Owen Moore, Tom Moore, Mae Murray, Marie Manon, Fred Niblo, Wheeler Oakman, Mary Pickford, Lottie Pickford, Theodore Roberts, Wesley H. Ruggles, Paul Scandon, Rolin Sturgeon, Conway Tearle, Mabel Van Buren, Eric von Stroheim, Henry Walthall, Crane Wilbur, Kathryn Williams (married four times, now wife of Charles Eyton).

Divorce suits now pending are omitted. No doubt almost as long a list of undivorced persons could be prepared.

This article has come to the end of its allotted space without having more than touched on the brighter and more wholesome phases of Hollywood life, which do exist abundantly.

Making of pictures is called an "industry" in Hollywood, and it is so.

The cost of many feature productions is from \$3,000 to \$5,000 a camera day. It takes at least five camera weeks to complete the picture, making the total cost sometimes more than \$100,000. The camera cannot be fooled--very much. If an actor has been out all night rioting, drinking or gambling, the camera sees it. He cannot go on. Unless scenes can be "shot" not requiring that actor's presence, the whole production is held up. Result, loss of between \$3,000 and \$5,000. If the picture has progressed so far that to call everything off would be ruinous, the offending actor is retained, but unless he reforms that is his last picture for this producer. He acquires a reputation for unreliability, and nobody wants him.

In a girl of the pictures, youth, vivacity, freshness--they must be real, not counterfeit--are everything. If they are all she has to give, if she does not develop dramatically, the length of her screen life is only about five years. They are precious years. Each day is a thing to be treasured and guarded. To the camera she must look the same every day of the weeks and even months that pass before a picture is finished. She cannot appear "on the lot" with a haggard face, with circles under the eyes, with crow foot wrinkles scarring the smoothness of her skin. All this is intolerable. The actors and actresses know it as well as the producers and directors.

It follows then--and is a fact--that the typical actor and actress, even if predisposed toward giddiness, is, during the long hard days when a picture is being made, a model of behavior. The letdown, if it comes, is in the interval between pictures. But, even in those vacations the players have to remember that when the next engagement begins they must look their best. So, to a degree, good conduct is self-enforced in Hollywood.

This is especially true of actors of "straight parts." The character actors, whose faces are often changed by makeup, do not have to be so careful.

PART III [What Happens to a New Girl in Hollywood?]

The city of Los Angeles and all the surrounding towns are full of beautiful girls toiling at homely occupations. The visitor sees them waiting

at table in restaurants, ladling macaroni in cafeterias, behind the counters of department stores, selling cigars and newspapers in open air shops and bobbing through the doors of factories. It is an exhibition of personal comeliness not wholly to be accounted for by the rich endowment bestowed by nature on the daughters of California.

The visitor makes inquiry and the answer he gets is this:

"So you've noticed all these picture faces? Why, they're the girls who came out here to be Mary Pickfords. They were the belles of their own home towns. Nice girls, most of them, and good looking enough, as you can see. But they mistook good looks and ambition for talent, and now they're lucky to have \$25 in their pay envelopes on Saturday night. It's quite a story. Look into it."

So the stranger looks into it and finds--

All over the country are girls eager to be motion picture stars. Such a girl has perhaps won a prize in a beauty contest. Her friends have assured her that she looks like Mary Pickford, Corinne Griffith, Enid Bennett, Mary Miles Minter, Gloria Swanson, Anita Stewart or some other celluloid princess. A new way of doing her hair, a penciled lift of the eyebrow add to the fancied resemblance. Like as not the girl makes a hit with the local public as the frolicsome ingenue of amateur theatricals. It dawns upon her that she is an actress as well as the fortunate possessor of the type of beauty for which (vide the screen magazines) the producers are searching the world with pockets full of gold.

But she is reminded that dramatic ability is not necessary, or at least can be speedily developed, for she reads of a big town beauty contest guaranteeing the winner a five weeks' engagement at Hollywood at \$600 a week. To be fair to the press agents and the interviewers, the best of them also tell the other side--the hard work, the sacrifice, the step by step climb whereby the finest actresses of the films, like those of the stage, have reached the height.

But to the typical screen struck girl, the spoiled darling of the small town, this means little. She has been told of her beauty so often that she

believes it, and probably it is true--in Toonerville. She has yet to learn of facts like this:

Nine delectable women pose successively before a motion picture camera, under the pitiless glare of mercury vapor lights. To the untrained eye--yes, and to the trained eye, too--the nine may look exactly alike. Not a mark, not a line to distinguish one from the others.

The test films are developed and taken to the projection room. There chemistry tells its grievous truths. Closeups of the nine women are thrown on the screen.

Four of the nine appear to be Ethiopians. Four are ordinary looking, neither attractive nor ugly, the kind that would pass unnoticed. The ninth--one woman of the nine--is the handsome creature that she seemed to the human eye.

As explained to me in Hollywood, this surprising variation is due to the quality of the skin. Some skins reflect too much light, some absorb too much; occasionally one has just the right actinic value. If it isn't right, there is nothing a woman can do to change it. She may be another Helen, but the screen will tell her she's a fright.

The proportion of good motion picture complexions is much smaller than one out of nine, that figure having been chosen at random for the purpose of illustration. And, of course, possession of the blooming cheek, the cameo profile and the sparkling eye does not mean that the fortunate lady can ever be an actress.

The ambition of our small town belle eventually carries her off to Los Angeles. Sometimes her mother, dissuasion having failed, accompanies her. Sometimes she is blessed with a relative in southern California, to whose home she can go. Often she is a runaway, dreaming of the day when her obdurate guardians will jump out of their seats at the movie show when they see her starring in her first big release. Going home they will find a check from her to lift the mortgage on the old place and perforce will nod their heads and say, "Well, it looks as if Theodosia done the right thing after all."

Somehow the girl reaches Los Angeles. The chances are that as she looks

around the station she sees no friendly face. Welfare work for the motion picture girls is scarcely begun. There is no agent of the Travelers Aid Society to meet the stranger and guide her aright. Two Methodist deaconesses attempt the task, but what can they do, with trains arriving at frequent intervals from the north, east and south, and the steamships sluicing their passengers up to the city from San Pedro?

If the girl has made a little inquiry in advance she knows she can go to the Y.W.C.A, the W.C.T.U. or the Salvation Army or one of the women's clubs and at least be directed to a boarding house. Let us assume she is sophisticated enough to do that. Let us even assume that she is so lucky as to get into the Studio Club in Hollywood. This is under the supervision of the national board of the Y.W.C.A. and the direction of Miss Marian Hunter and is doing on a small scale a splendid work, which it ought to be doing on a big scale.

It is a club for girls with serious dramatic ambitions. It gives them a room, with breakfast and dinner on weekdays and three meals on Sunday, for \$10.50 a week. But it can accommodate only nineteen girls--nineteen of the chosen among thousands who think themselves called.

Our small town Pickford will find it hard to find shelter elsewhere in Hollywood. Hollywood is not a furnished room resort, but a fastidious suburb. More than one-half of its population of 70,000 are not in the movie industry and a good many of this majority entertain a prejudice against movie people.

In passing I might say that the prejudice struck me as largely without justification at present. In the pioneer days--away back eight or nine years ago--the movies were harum-scarum. Companies of actors "on location" used to smash shrubbery and scatter milk bottles and lunch boxes over fine estates they borrowed for camera purposes. Nowadays discipline is enforced and the studio management sends along a special cleanup squad to remove any debris. If accidentally damage is done the producer pays for it promptly. The owner of perhaps the finest show place in Hollywood now lets the actors in, charging a small fee, which goes to his gardener.

Similarly the movie people early acquired the reputation of being

undesirable tenants. Landlords complained that they gave noisy parties at night and massacred the furniture. One of the biggest landlords told me, however, that the boisterous minority which did this had gradually been weeded out and that some of his best tenants were actors and directors. He said there was no longer any excuse for the newspaper advertisement that appeared not long ago, "No children, no dogs, no movies."

My personal testimony is that for several nights I rode and walked through the residential as well as the business parts of Hollywood. with ears attuned to noise of any wave length and heard nothing but the metallic click of eucalyptus leaves as the trade wind set brother against brother. One one of these trips a tall and amiable stranger walked up beside me.

"Sure feels lonesome," he said. "I live up the hill a few blocks. Looking for any one in particular?"

"No," I said. "I was looking for orgies."

He laughed.

"They're all doing that. Couple of nights ago two tourists came up to me and asked if they could get in one some of these wild parties they'd been reading about.

" 'Orgies?' says I. 'That's it, orgies,' says one of the tourists.

" 'A cinch,' says I. 'What kind of orgy do you prefer--merely dope or love cult, or something deeper? I am one of the official orgy guides.'

"The tourists decided I was a nut and beat it. Orgies! There's many a young blood around here would like to get into one once, just to see what they're like, you know, but they can't find 'em. I've never located one, and I been here three years had have had a bit of luck writing for the screen. Where you from? Ever live in a small town?"

I told him I had spent several years in a New England village whose population of 749 hardly varied from census to census.

"That's the idea," my new friend said. "Hollywood at night is just like your New England village. It's just a dormitory for the cops. I recollect one night they had to wake up and tell Jack Dempsey some of his crowd were disturbing the neighbors, but outside of that, nothing. Well, here's where I

live. Good luck on your search. Oh, for a jolly old orgy to take the creak out of these joints. But don't believe all you hear. Good night."

But we have wandered away, through the scented night of Hollywood, from the screen struck girl and what befalls her. Having found a room--\$20 a month is about the cheapest in Los Angeles, which embraces Hollywood, but is seven miles away--she learns right away that there is no use in presenting herself at a motion picture studio without a photograph of herself.

She finds one of the many photographers who make a specialty of emergency calls like this one. She is rather stunned when the assistant tells her of the thousands of pictures they have supplied to other girls. But with the dozen precious photographs she sets forth. Originally she thought that it might be enough to apply at just one studio, but her few hours sojourn have given her a glimmering of the truth.

The first studio she goes to has a row of plain one story buildings fronting the street behind a line of pepper trees. Automobiles by the hundred are parked outside. A few shabby old men are standing by the curb.

The girl has been told to ask for the casting director. She asks one of the old men where he can be found. This man has a face waffled by many a desert sun. He removes his hat and points to a door in the side of the row of low buildings.

"Are you--are you an actor?" the girl ventures. The old man is not without a sense of proportion.

"Well, miss," he says, "it might be nigher the truth to say I'm a miner. Montana, Death Valley, Mexico and all points between. I had a little hard luck down to Sonora and came up here to take a whirl at a new game. No, miss, I can't truthfully say I'm an actor. I'm what they call an extra. When I work I get \$10 a day because they figure I'm what they call a good rough and ready type. Some gets \$5, some \$7.50, according to how they look and what they have to do. I had two days work last week; so far this week none. Figuring on getting into the movies?"

The girl nods her head. The miner surveys her gravely, seems about to say something, but ends with, "Well, good luck; some gets away with it," and turns

away.

We can't spend much time following this girl's adventures, for there are other phases of Hollywood to report upon. She enters through the door into a narrow passage. At the other end she sees sunlight. But it is the sunlight of a forbidden country--the "lot," the inside of the studio enclosure. Half way to the alluring sunlight stands a barrier, a low gate, and beside a gate the keeper thereof.

Nothing that has been written or said about the perfection with which the studio gatekeeper plays his part is exaggerated. You get by or you don't. If you belong in the lot you reach it; if you are not on the list of the elect of the lord of the lot you stay outside.

Persons who have not been in Hollywood, but have tried to pass the stage doorkeeper of a New York theater may picture a stage doorkeeper seven times sterner and more bored looking, and that is the gatekeeper of Hollywood. But just before she reaches him the girl sees a door at the left of the tunnel-like passageway. That lets her into a small, square room against whose walls are hard wooden benches. Half a dozen men and women are sitting there. They strike the girl as decidedly frowsy--the whole lot of them. For their part, they look the newcomer up and down in frank appraisal.

Between this room and a smaller one adjoining and open window has been cut in the partition. A young man is sitting by this window in the smaller room. The girl asks for the casting director. The man tells her the casting director never sees strangers unless they come with cards or letters from his friends, and often not even then. He is too busy. She doesn't know any of his friends.

The young man explains, courteously, that he is an assistant casting director. The girl says that she wishes to be an actress. She passes over one of the photographs. The young man rattles off a list of questions and writes the answers on a card. He records her age, weight, height, color, wardrobe, type, experience and other personal details. According to the card, which goes into a filing cabinet, her type is "school girl," her experience "none" and her wardrobe "modern," she having told the man that she had brought from home

several frocks, including an evening gown.

"That's all," the man says. "We have your telephone number. If we need you we'll call you. No use hanging around."

"And what am I to do when called?" she says. "Extra--mob stuff," he answers.

Then, it being a slow day and assistant directors are not always curmudgeons as painted, he takes time to ask her if she has also registered at the Service Bureau. She learns that this is an employment agency, operated by the Motion Picture Producers' Association in Los Angeles for the purpose of effecting economy through centralization and also of weeding out superfluous and undesirable extras. Later she finds out more about the army of extras in whose ranks (if she is so fortunate as to be called) she must grub toward stardom.

"At first," a wise man of Hollywood tells her, "they were mostly hysterical kids rushing out to Hollywood to jump in and make a big splash. Now they are pretty much shaken down to hard boiled persons looking for work. They used to flock around the studios to loll, chew gum, read the movie magazines and talk big. They cluttered the streets and didn't add anything to the reputation of the town in the eyes of those who wish it well. Now they are all card indexed and most of them stay at home beside the telephone, so as not to miss a call. That is why you see so few movie people outside the studios during the day. They are either on the lot, out on location or in their homes.

"You're registered as a school girl type. Well, if a director who is shooting on the lot wants twenty-five school kids to floss up something he's doing he sends word to the casting director; the casting director's assistant grabs twenty-five 'school girl' cards from his card index and works the phone until he gets the right number. Or he phones the Service Bureau in Los Angeles: 'Have twenty-five school girls, swell dressers, here by 11 o'clock.' Some of the studios work it one way, some the other.

"There are also half a dozen private 'exchanges' or employment bureaus for extras. Many girls on piece work in factories are on the extra list. When a lot of people are wanted for some big spectacle they get into the mobs and

make their \$5 or \$7.50 a day. Ordinary mob stuff pays \$5. Then again mere 'atmosphere' may be wanted. That may bring in a crowd without any experience or movie ambition at all--a lot of farmers right off the ranch, for instance, to piece out a street scene in rural drama, or a lynching scene, or maybe a bunch of Chinese from Los Angeles to swell the mob in a Boxer rebellion. This pays \$3 a day. The farmers get a lot of fun out of coming to the studios occasionally and pretending they're actors.

"The extras--on the legitimate stage they're called supers--have to be on the lot by half past 8 in the morning the same as the actors, for shooting starts at 9. If there's no rush to get the production done, they're through at 5 o'clock, but if there's a rush, as there often is, they may have to stick around late at night, or even all night.

"It's hard work, and irregular work, uncertain as to money return, usually getting you nowhere except a certain standing as a dependable extra. I've seen many a one start with a flourish in the morning and quit for good the first night, especially when the company goes into the country on location. At such times the discipline of the big studios is so strict that all the extras have to sit in their rubberneck wagons until called. They may sit there all day in the cold and rain. There are interminable, wearisome waits.

"And the worst of it for the screen struck youngsters is that they may never catch even a glimpse, except at a distance, of the worshiped stars. Often the stars do not figure in the mob stuff at all; they may be miles away while the sequence is being shot. And at the studios the extras can't wander whither they wish; they are herded in one place, and no stars are in that place.

"Yes, it's a tough life, but don't let me discourage you. A few girls have come up through it, but remember, only a few. Once in a while I hear of one who is sensible enough to go back home and marry the proprietor of the Elite Garage, but a great many of those who are crowded out are too proud to go, or haven't money enough. Hence the lovely ladies you see gracing the cafeterias and department stores of Los Angeles.

"A few girls with baby doll faces and nothing else have been starred, but if you look over the list seriously you will find that the majority possess not only that rarity, a complexion that photographs well, but a personality, an almost indefinable ability to register changing moods without conscious effort, to feel what they're playing and make the spectator feel it. In my opinion the baby doll phase is passing, and more and more the screen is demanding real actors and actresses."

Our small town belle has a sudden thought as the wise man of Hollywood ends his disquisition.

"What," she says, "happened to Travesta Turbine, the girl who won the prize in that beauty contest and got a starring engagement for five weeks at \$600 a week?"

"They paid her the money all right," the friendly cynic makes reply. "As for the rest, she had no more brains than a snail. They made a few long shots of her and then doubled her with a woman who can act. They told Travesta she could hang around and get a movie education if she wanted to. She did for a while, but as nobody paid any attention to her she gathered up her \$3,000 and left Hollywood to worry along as best it could. It was just an advertising stunt for the studio and the paper that ran the contest. Few studios do it."

The small town belle is not discouraged--yet. As the telephone never rings, she takes to making the rounds of the studios every day. She finds them cheerful enough. She wonders sometimes if it wouldn't be better for her if they were harsher.

"Can't use you just now, but come again," the assistant casting director says. He really means it, after a fashion, for the girl is not hopeless: she dresses well; her obdurate parents have relented to the extent of sending her money, realizing that it will take some time to effect a cure and that the climate of California, though salubrious, is not nutritious.

She is inspired by the few instances she hears of quick success in the midst of failure or plodding. A friend at the Studio Club tells her of Zasu Pitts. Mrs. Pitts brought her daughter to the Studio Club from Santa Cruz. She was a timid country, small town girl, without training or obvious ability. She

registered as an extra. Very soon fortune placed her in Mary Pickford's company, filming "The Poor Little Rich Girl." She developed personality. Directors gave her small parts and she acquitted herself well, never ceasing meanwhile to study the difficult technique. In less than three years she was a star. That was a very rapid ascent.

Then our small town girl hears the story of Lois Lee, another graduate of the Studio Club. A magazine beauty contest lifted her from obscurity, but it happened that Lois Lee, unlike most of the prodigies thus discovered, had common sense as well as beauty. As the prize winner she played a "lead" without experience. When the picture was finished she astonished the director by insisting on tossing away whatever prestige this might have given her and beginning at the bottom as an extra. She had brains enough to see that she didn't know anything about acting and humility enough to be willing to do mob scenes in order to learn. She worked up through and is now playing leads again.

Another Studio Club girl quit a first class stenographic job at \$35 a week for the lure of the movies. She was pretty, a good dancer, "mad about acting," a girl from whom the uninitiated would expect rapid progress. She went to work as an extra and also did small bits. The very first week she was busy every day and made \$60. She chanced to be exactly the type a director had been looking for a certain sequence of scenes. But her prosperity ended with the sequence.

During the next three weeks she earned nothing. She kept an exact account. In three months she received \$140. That was just what she had earned in one month as a stenographer. She discovered that she was not an actress and that the pictures requiring a girl of her type were few and far between. She returned to her pothooks and typewriter and lived happily ever after.

Her brief experience had taught her much. She had learned that the open field for extras is not as open as it appeared to be; that casting directors are in the habit of choosing again and again persons whom they know and are used to; that in most of the studios, as is entirely natural, the relatives of employees have the first call, provided they meet the requirements; that many

studios have their own small salaried "stock" actors, who play most of the bits; that if an extra woman has not a specially interesting personality she may go ten weeks without earning a single dollar; that the chance of any one in a mob scene catching the director's eye is slim; that the average picture has only eight or ten acting parts at the most and the average extra has no more chance of ever getting a part in Hollywood than he has of taking Caruso's place at the Metropolitan.

And how fares amid this disillusionment the day dreaming middle Western belle who went to Hollywood to improve the movies? I do not know. Hers is merely a typical case, set forth from what I learned of many cases. The chances of her name ever appearing in electric lights are at least 99 to 1 against her. She may keep on and settle down as an extra, averaging perhaps \$25 a week. She may swallow her pride and go home. She may join the innumerable company of picture failures with picture faces crowding one another for jobs in the stores and shops of California. Or she may disappear altogether from her accustomed walks. Some of the girls "who look like Mary Pickford" do that, too.

"One of the most distressing facts," said Miss Hunter, the finely poised director of the Studio Club, "is that so many of the girls who come here have parents or brothers and sisters to support. They expect to earn large salaries quickly and you can imagine the worry when they find that perhaps they can't earn anything at all. If they fail it is sometimes because they want the home folks to think they had made good here, sometimes because it helps them to make good."

Having heard that a good many movie girls had had experiences with evil directors I asked Miss Hunter what conclusion she had come to on this point.

"Before I came to Hollywood," she said, "I worked among girls in large cities. I have found less viciousness here than elsewhere. Some of the men in the motion picture industry do present a problem, but not more so than some of the men in department stores or factories. I know of men here who have worked themselves into places of power in studios and who use that power to block the progress of girls who are not complaisant. I know of girls who have revolted

and have left Hollywood for this reason. But these instances are exceptional.

"I could name many girls of my acquaintance who have reached the top without ever having heard a disagreeable proposal. It ought to be noted that William Desmond Taylor, the director who was murdered, had a fine reputation among the girls. He was quiet, courteous, patient. He did not fool the girls with careless flattery, as some directors do, but if a girl was able to see him personally he gave sensible encouragement if he thought it deserved. I have talked with many girls and never heard one of them say a word against him."

I put the same question to John H. Pelletier, director of the Morals Efficiency Association of Southern California, which functions like the Committee of Fourteen in New York in reporting vice.

"Only a small percentage of girls who go to the studios meet objectionable treatment," he said. "Personally I know of only once instance. The morally irresponsible director is a marked man. Also marked is the type of woman who is willing to oblige a director in any way in order to break into the movies. The producers are more careful than they used to be in keeping out directors and women of these types. But you could render a service by publishing this warning to mothers. This city is no place for a girl to come to without money or without relatives or friends here any more than is New York."

Another expert view: "Don't forget that the pictures have attracted here half baked girls and boys from everywhere. The worst menace is not the director or the girl or the camera roughneck or any of the others you've heard about, but the aristocratic, ne'er do well gambling and mashing sons of rich Eastern men, who have come out here with the idea that this is the devil's playground."

"What is your advice to girls?" I asked Miss Hunter.

"Stay at home," she said. "If you have come to Hollywood, go home unless it is proved that you have unusual charm and individuality and enough money to keep you going for at least a year. As a matter of fact, two years is necessary for a fair trial. Remember that stars are not made in a day or a

month or two. Remember that there is a great and tediously acquired technique behind the motion pictures. Remember that there are success and happiness for few, failure and dismay for many."

This good counsel may discourage a few of the butterflies who might otherwise join in the foolish chase around the pepper trees of Hollywood. But until the movies lose their glamour there will undoubtedly continue to be girls like the one who recently ran away from home to be near the studios. She had fallen in love with a lofty hero of the screen whose specialty is rescuing forlorn maidens and carrying them off in a rakish roadster over winding, perilous mountain trails. Her ambition point not toward art but toward the hero. [2]

Barred from the studios, she climbed ten foot fences to get at him. Driving home at night, he found her hiding in his car. When he walked in his garden, she materialized from vines and shrubbery. As this actor has a wife and children and is a mild and prosaic citizen when not skyhooting before the camera, the attentions of the runaway girl from the East embarrassed him not a little. He sent for her parents and had her taken home, but at last report she was planning another sortie and the star was about to retreat to Honolulu.

Rupert Hughes, who returned to Hollywood while was there, says most of the gossip about the movie people and their customs is poppycock.

"I've been on the lot two years," he assured me, "and never have even seen a woman kissed, except as called for by the script. I have never seen a drunken man, have never seen any soliciting in the streets. Hollywood is just as clean as any theological seminary, and any other statement befouls the man who makes it. I have had jobs to offer, careers to make. No woman has as much as hinted to me that she was willing to grant favors to get along. These matters aside, let the public keep in mind the words of Ian Maclaren: 'Be pitiful, because everybody's having a hard fight.' "

To this may be added the observation of one who has watched Hollywood from its romper days and sees it now adolescent but growing up:

"Bad has been mixed with the good here and a man is a fool to deny it. But the big question is, Who is molding the movies, the rotten producer, the

rotten director, the rotten actor? Or is it the decent people with an adequate set of ideals which they don't bother to say much about? To me it is the latter. To me the movies are not the Arbuckles, but the Fairbankses, the Mary Pickfords, the Bill Harts, the Charley Rays, the Conrad Nagels, the Will Rogerses, the Harold Lloyds--scores of others, the finest in the world, setting an example of good acting and good citizenship.

PART IV [Brief Tour of Some Hollywood Studios]

We rode from beauteous Hollywood down to the flats toward the ocean, where derricks against the skyline betrayed the oil wells of Culver City. The car stopped beside a low cottage. Outside the cottage, with her back to us, stood a crookback witch peering into a hand mirror propped on a window sill while she applied dabs of fresh putty to an already terrifying nose and chin.

Our guide said, "This is Mark Jones. Mr. Jones, I'd like you to meet this man from New York who has come here to write up the movies." The witch, turning and grinning with every snaggle tooth, extended a hand. "Fine weather we're having," she said, and Mark Jones, kindest of men, blackest of motion picture villains, returned to his mirror and make-up box.

The guide took us around the corner of the cottage and we came to another one which had a front stoop. By the stoop crouched a Confederate soldier. He wore a gray uniform with "C.S.A." on the belt, forage cap, sword, square bowed spectacles and short side whiskers. The witch went over and joined him. The Confederate groveled in the sand at her feet, then suddenly leaped up, grasped the sword hilt and marched off very fine and resolute. Then he went back and did it again. He said something to the witch and she leered and clawed in the air with wheedling fingers twisting in front of his face. But he waved her aside and, disregarding her mumbled curses, strode away. He strode maybe eight feet, then stopped and said to a youth waiting at the camera, "All right, let 'er go." All the action was repeated while the camera man cranked. Then the soldier came forward smiling to meet our guide.

"Harold," said the guide, "you better shake hands with this man. He's

come from New York to write up the movies."

"Good heavens!" cried Harold Lloyd, for the "Secesh" was none other, "are we as bad as that?"

He proved to be boyish, unaffected, likable. He led forth his leading woman, Mildred Davis, a blue eyed, yellow haired, fragile looking girl. She wished it to be understood that she was indignant over the published stories about Hollywood and that lots of girls in the movies were just like those she had known at finishing school in Philadelphia. She dropped a curtsey and said precisely, "I am very glad to have met you," before going back to the automobile which was to take them back into the hills for other scenes of the new Lloyd comedy. Mr. Lloyd paused to explain that the fragment we had just scene was part of a sequence in which he plays his own grandfather. He had never worn a disguise before.

"How long does it take you to make a comedy?" we asked him.

"Well, we've been five months and a half on this one, but it's nearly finished."

"Why so long," we said, knowing that many pictures are completed in a few weeks.

"I don't know, unless it is that you've got to take a lot of pains to make people laugh." The lad, excusing himself and holding the sword against his leg to stop its gyrations, ran off to join Miss Davis. Our guide sprinted us around the second cottage, where we came to a sign "Central Hotel" swinging from a two story shack. A big man in a blue shirt and overalls was rehearsing a recumbent burro. The burro was supposed to scramble to its feet when the big man, standing a few feet in front, snapped his fingers. In its own good time it did so.

"All right, Sammy, get aboard," called out another man, who by every token of riding breeches and leather puttees should have been a movie director, which indeed he was. A little negro boy with half his galluses missing shot up from nowhere, mounted the burro, dug his bare knees into his ribs and pounded the beast with his fists. The boy was Sunshine Sammy. If you saw "Penrod" you remember him. In the new picture it will appear that it was

Sammy's frantic goading that stirred the burro from its siesta in front of the Central Hotel, but we are here to swear that it was the snapping and clucking of that trainer out in front beyond the range of the camera.

Sammy then sauntered over to a neighboring log pile and sat down beside a young negro woman. She is his tutor--a graduate of the University of Texas. The law compels each studio to provide schooling for its actors not yet 16 years of age. Sunshine Sammy snatches his education in large bites between camera shots. On this day the textbook was "Work and Play With Language." The teacher showed him a picture and he had to write a story about it. When we left Sammy he was bent over his copy book and had written as far as "Once there were two goats lived on opposite sides of the stream."

Studios of the Hollywood district vary widely in appearance. Some sprawl like lumber yards and are about as tidy. Others would satisfy the most exacting architect or housewife. The Hal E. Roach Studios, where Harold Lloyd, Sunshine Sammy and others make their comedies, are of the informal type. The Goldwyn Studios, which we next visited, are a great white city of forty-two buildings, eighteen of which are permanent steel and concrete or stucco. These with the temporary "sets" are scattered over fifty acres of ground.

The talisman that got us past the gatekeeper was the name of Joe A. Jackson, publicity chief, whom we had known in New York as a newspaper man. The master of the gate phoned Mr. Jackson and suddenly became human and opening the barrier told us where to find him. We passed through the administration building into the "lot." In the scene opening before us were well kept lawns and tropical foliage--ten acres of lawn and garden, the dutiful Joe told us--many little parks set down between and surrounding four great glass roofed, glass walled stages where interior scenes are made. We inspected a workshop as big as New York's City Hall, where movie scenery is made; a huge property room where 15,000 objects ranging from thrones of emperors to pine needles are neatly classified and tagged; a wardrobe room from among whose 5,000 costumes can instantly be summoned the appareling of King Menelik's army, the hordes of Ghengis Khan, a harem, a whaling expedition or a bull fight; a laboratory with aproned girl alchemists transforming raw

yellow film into the magic ribbon of the projectoscope and with gigantic wooden drums on which the finished ribbon was being dried, revolving in heated atmosphere.

But I have no intention of wearying the reader with a detailed description of the complex organism which is the modern picture making plant. Joe Jackson and I walked around the property room and a glassed in stage that would house a Zeppelin and found ourselves standing in front of the Town Hall and flagpole and looking past Anders feed store, down a village street toward comfortable looking cottages behind fine shade trees. I liked especially an old brown house set back from the street with a geranium bordered walk leading to the porch.

"It's interesting on the inside, too," said Joe. "Let's go in." We stepped firmly up to the porch, opened the front door and were confronted by-- nothing. That is, there were timbers propping up the walls of the house; otherwise merely a stubbily open space. The house was a carefully built and painted shell. The two large trees that give it shade--sycamores, I think--had been brought from miles away. The geraniums were in buried pots. The lawn was transplanted sod. The brown house was a set built in a few hours for Rupert Hughes' play, "The Old Nest." The village of which it was part had been peopled for a day. Grass was now growing in the streets. The studio spaces of California are filled with deserted villages. It surprised me that they were allowed to stand after their mission was accomplished, but I was told that with a little change here and there most of them can be used again and again for other pictures.

Beyond this melancholy Main Street we came upon a high arched wall and a turret with a window and balcony. It was here that Will Rogers doubled for Romeo. He jumped backward from the balcony to a landing net, then from the landing net to the ground. With the film reversed and the landing net cut out he seemed in the picture to spring from the ground to the balcony to greet his Juliet.

Next we traversed a street in Peking constructed for Gouverneur Morris' photoplay, "A Tale of Two Worlds." For Boxer rebels several hundred Los

Angeles Chinese were hired at \$7.50 a day--the high cost of Chinese being one of the reasons why it takes so much money to make a movie spectacle. Nearby was a Mississippi River town, created for "The Sin Flood." A stroll along the levee brought us to the Five Points of New York as that spot appeared in 1869, reconstructed with the help of old prints for the Gertrude Atherton picture, "Don't Neglect Your Wife." Its crazy groggeries, drunken lampposts and rounded cobbles were all made on the lot.

Thence we passed into a street of New York's East Side, which even the Hon. Louis Zeltner would O.K. The Yiddish shop signs were authenticated by a rabbi from Los Angeles. This street was utilized in "Hungry Hearts." There are twenty or thirty acres of these strangely neighboring communities--all the world and its fantasies in Goldwyn's back yard. They are much more fascinating to the stranger than Coney Island, the only trouble being that the stranger can't get in any more than he can get behind the scenes in a theater.

A glance into the casting office completed our visit to the Goldwyn establishment. There they let us look into filing cabinets where 10,000 men, women and children are card indexed, each with a photograph of the subject in his most alluring pose. These are the persons registered for employment in the pictures as players of parts, bit people or extras.

The next stop on the grand tour was Charley Chaplin's studio in Hollywood. On the way we passed several others, including the massive colonial mansion of Thomas H. Ince and the steep roofed, many colored, many angled, moated old mill of Irving Willat. This curious structure is said to be the House that Jack Built. If so Jack as an artist has never had the credit he deserves.

But what shall we say of Chaplin, who perpetrates his comedies in one of the beauty spots of Hollywood? You ride along Sunset Boulevard and come to a box hedge behind which are tall evergreens and palms screening a large white house of Colonial design. The fattest of oranges on the greenest of trees shine at you over the hedge. Among them a big cherry tree is in full bloom. Charley Chaplin does not live in the house, but his brother Syd does. It came with the estate, a whole block which Chaplin bought for \$38,000, house and

all, a few years ago, and is now worth \$150,000. Residents of that part of Hollywood shrieked when they found that Chaplin had got the place and was going to build a studio. They protested on aesthetic, material and all other grounds. But within fifteen days after the completion of the studio the value of abutting property jumped from 100 to 200 per cent, and the wailing died away. Chaplin had fooled them by erecting for his administration offices--the part of the studio which the public sees--a row of brick or stucco cottages which would do credit to an English cathedral town.

Penetrating one of these English cottages we came to the Chaplin "lot" and saw the steel and glass stage where the great pantomimist concocts his foolery. Just one company uses it--Chaplin's. There are two one storied rows of dressing rooms, one for men, the other for women. The dressing room of Edna Purviance, the Chaplin leading woman, who is to be starred independently, is a little larger than the others. Between these two buildings is a deep swimming pool which serves for all sorts of aquatic mishaps. Drained it enabled Chaplin to do his trench fighting in "Shoulder Arms." We inspected his riding horse, Florrie, and learned from the contents of his garage that he has only two cars, a limousine and a touring car, with only one chauffeur. His property room is a museum of every relic known to the slapstick art, including a wall motto, "Love Thy Neighbor." His private room is a comfortable study. An alcove opening from it is his dressing room. On a costumer in the alcove hang the celebrated Chaplin habiliments, including three bowler hats. Reverently we examined the hats. Each of them had been bashed in my many a stuffed club and falling wall and the tears neatly sewed up again with surgical precision so that now the crowns were criss crossed with honorable scars. The size is 7 1/8. Also in the alcove is a dressing table with three mirrors, and on the table I hastily noted a button hook, a shoe horn, a pair of scissors, a comb, grease paints and a box of cornstarch. The furniture in the big outer room includes a large leather covered davenport and chairs, a flat mahogany desk, bare of papers as an industrial captain's should be, and a small shelf of books. On the shelf were copies of "Punch" and "Le Rire," a collection of poems, "Behold the Man"; "Shakespeare in London," "La Vie des Lettres" and

"Through the Russian Revolution," by Albert Rhys Williams. These samples attested the truth of what I had heard about the range of Chaplin's reading.

In a cement walk outside the stage those toeing out footsteps have been preserved for the puzzlement of future zoologists. On the day of the cornerstone laying Chaplin pranced the length of the walk, which was still soft, and wrote his name in the soft concrete block, with the date, January 21, 1918.

Continuing our drive through Hollywood we came next to the studios of the Famous Players-Lasky Company. It covered two blocks near the center of town, one of the offices, stages, and other permanent buildings, one for the outdoor sets. Both are fringed with graceful pepper trees. Here the sealed door opened with the pressure of a button because a good friend left the password at the gate. It is so hard to get by this gate that the visitor shoots through in a hurry for fear some mistake has been made. He finds himself in a hard packed sanded street flanked on one side by the low office buildings, on the other by three or four monster stages of the now familiar sort, a blending of warehouse and conservatory. My friend took me into one of the stages. It was a vast place. We threaded our way among darkened sets until, rounding one of them, we came upon a patch of brilliant light. Moving closer we saw that the rays of the lights, fifteen of them I should say, trained from an upper level as well as the floor, converged at a spot where stood a stalwart young man in khaki breeches and cobalt blue, open throated shirt. He was in the act of defying a fat, epauletted, much medaled Latin American generalissimo. A director whom I couldn't see called "All ready." Epaulettes turned his head to blow out a lungful of cigarette smoke and then, while the handsome Gringo regarded him tensely, the camera began grinding. Around the room in which this episode was being filmed were scattered other Latins--ragged peons with conical straw hats and haughty lieutenants of the big chief. I knew nothing more except that they were doing "The Dictator" and the hero with the blue shirt was Wallace Reid. The director, James Cruze, was getting whatever effects he wanted by speaking softly. Where is the lair of the cursing, slave driving director? I saw none of his kind anywhere in Hollywood.

Through another cavernous stage, labyrinth of sets, past the tank where sank the Lusitania in Mary Pickford's "Little American," we walked until we struck another circle of light. This time we looked into the living room of a South African farmhouse. A young man sat at a table, covered with red damask, playing cards with a blond who was fair to behold. You could tell by the way she pretended to steady the cards while listening for a sound of approaching hoofbeats that she was using the card game as a ruse to hold the young man until a rescuer came galloping up. The players were Dorothy Dalton and Milton Sills. This ended their day's work. Sills chatted a moment with the director, George Melford, and left the stage with a blue book under his arm. "Looking for orgies, I suppose," he said, passing us. "My personal hobby is decadent literature. Look at it." The book was Robinson's "English Flower Gardens."

Another set on the Lasky lot proved to be a boudoir. A beautiful young woman with loosed blonde hair cascading over a negligee house gown stood with her back to the wall. This was Agnes Ayres. The faultless face and form of the young man whom she held captive while registering anguish was that of Conrad Nagel.

From Lasky's we went over to the United Studios, one of the largest in Hollywood. Outwardly it might be a gardener's lodge on a fine estate. Inwardly it has real gardens and four streets bordered with cottages which are used as settings as well as for office and dressing rooms. One of these, a red roofed cottage, housed Mary Pickford and her staff while "Little Lord Fauntleroy" was being made. She and her husband have their own studio now. We entered a stage which is 300 feet long and 160 feet wide. We passed a gorgeous throne room and the interior of the British House of Commons and stopped at a bower where Guy Bates Post was at work on one of the difficult double exposure scenes of "The Masquerader." Post, in evening dress, was standing at a door of the bower and gazing anxiously into the night. And out of the night the camera was shooting him, through the door.

Richard Walton Tully, adapter of Temple Thurston's novel for stage use, was there in the capacity of supervisor. The director, James Young, was somewhere about. But the man who really directs the action for double exposure

is the camera man. There is a chalk line on the floor which the actor must not pass with foot or gesture. The camera man, looking into his finder, is the only man who can tell when this line is threatened. This camera man, while he cranked, was saying: "A little closer, Mr. Post--a couple of inches yet--look out--you've reached the limit--step back a little, Mr. Post--now all right--show yourself more front behind the door--that's good." And Post was obeying too.

"How much now?" Tully inquired.

"Fifty feet," said the camera man.

"Enough." The cranking stopped. Only five feet of film were needed for this little scene. The five feet that show the actor with the expression and attitude best expressing the emotion of the moment will be cut out and used, the remaining forty-five discarded.

Our studio tour ended with a visit to Universal City, several miles north of Hollywood, in San Fernando Valley, reached by way of a deep and fragrant canyon, Cahuenga Pass. Here is the world's largest motion picture expanse. There is no city in the ordinary sense, nothing but the Universal plant, but its completeness makes it a film metropolis. To the original 250 acres have recently been added 350 more. Among its accessories are a menagerie and a ranch with a full complement of cowboys and Mexicans and bronchos, not to mention mesquite and chaparral.

In the course of time a sojourn in the studio country dulls one's appreciation of marvels, but something came into our vision as we approached Universal City that proved we were not yet jaded. On the crest of a lofty hill, across the tops of the white buildings in the valley, we saw a full rigged, three masted ship. On that hilltop "Robinson Crusoe" is being filmed. The reason was plain enough when given. It is cheaper to build a ship on a hill near the studio than it is to go down to San Pedro and buy or rent one. And on the hill the camera, shooting always at a background of sky, attains the desired effect as of an illimitable ocean. Opposite the entrance to Universal City is a perfect reproduction of a section of waterfront and pier as seen from the street of a seaport, with yellow funnels rising from a dummy

steamship aboard which countless anxious couples have eloped to Buenos Aires and Singapore. Just inside the main gate stands a trolley car labeled "Monte Carlo" in front and "Battery Park" behind. Such are the wonders of movieland.

NEXT ISSUE:

March 1926: Cyclone around Keyes

"The Truth About Hollywood":

PART V [How Much Do the Stars Earn?]

NOTES:

[1]Wallace Reid

[2]Wallace Reid

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.uno.edu/~drif/arbuckle/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>

For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 14 -- February 1994 Editor: Bruce Long *
* All reprinted material is in the public domain *

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March 1926: Cyclone around Keyes

"The Truth About Hollywood":

Part 5 [How Much Do the Stars Earn?]

What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

March 1926: Cyclone around Keyes

The first major newspaper revival of the Taylor murder took place in March 1926, four years after the crime. Los Angeles District Attorney Asa Keyes and his assistant Harold Davis took a trip across the USA, and the national press soon erupted in a cyclone of contradictory rumors and revelations. The following items are just a few of the highlights.

* * * * *

March 11, 1926

John Emge

HARTFORD TIMES

Taylor Mystery not a Mystery to Hollywood

Hollywood, Ca.--The woman who killed William Desmond Taylor, motion picture director, four years ago doubtless smiled grimly when she read in Los Angeles newspapers the report that District Attorney Asa Keyes was in New York investigating new clues bearing on the case. Many persons here are firmly convinced that if Attorney Keyes could persuade certain people right here to tell what they know there would be no further mystery in the killing of Taylor.

Many in the movie colony and some police officials here have no doubt that they actually know the name and residence of the matron who shot the debonair director that dark night.

According to a motion picture producer who was an intimate friend of Taylor the director was killed by a woman in male attire--by a relative of a young woman rising in the films whom the woman who committed the act believed was being drawn into intimacy by Taylor.

The writer has been given this information by a reliable informant, who states that the elder woman had warned the director that she would kill him if he continued his relations with the girl. These alleged relations included the plying with liquor and drugs. Taylor is said to have told friends that he feared vengeance from the woman and meant to be careful. Members of the woman's family and police know the woman left home in male attire the night the director was killed, but she defied detectives who questioned her to produce any evidence against her.

Police, though convinced that she shot Taylor, were unable to secure sufficient proof to warrant an arrest. Persistent efforts to build up a case that would stand up in court failed and the attempt was abandoned.

The woman is now about 50 years old. She is seen on Hollywood boulevards frequently. She once had many friends in the motion picture industry, but today takes little part in the colony's social life.

She is not severely condemned by those who know the facts, the belief being that she was driven to the verge of insanity by Taylor's affair with the young relative. Police who took part in the original investigation are also said to be charitably disposed toward the woman. There is only a remote possibility that she will be called to account by the law. So far as Hollywood is concerned, the Taylor murder has reached a stage where nobody cares, but a number do smile when they read that District Attorney Keyes is seeking new clues in New York. [1]

* * * * *

March 18, 1926

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Highly valuable information regarding the mysterious murder of William Desmond Taylor, motion picture director, is said to have been gathered here during last week by Chief Deputy District Attorney Buron Fitts on direct orders of District Attorney Asa Keyes. Mr. Fitts is said to have brought the case closer to its solution than it has ever been since the director was found murdered on the floor of his bungalow on South Alvarado street February 1, 1922.

On orders from Mr. Keyes who is now in New York, Miss Margery Berger, income tax specialist who handles a number of motion picture clients, was questioned during the week by Fitts regarding her knowledge of certain conversations had with her about Taylor.

Mr. Keyes, who is working on another phase of the case in New York, admitted yesterday that he had requested Mr. Fitts to question Miss Berger regarding a link in the chain of evidence he is now building up in the case in the East. It is reported that Mr. Fitts gained information which is perhaps the most valuable yet obtained in the case.

Mr. Fitts refused to discuss the matter yesterday, saying that he could not disclose any details of the investigation.

An investigator from the District Attorney's office and a shorthand reporter visited Miss Berger and took her statement at length. Efforts are now

being made to corroborate this statement through numerous other witnesses.

"I have nothing to tell about the murder of William Desmond Taylor," said Miss Berger. "I knew Mr. Taylor during his lifetime and made out his income tax reports for him. I also knew several other people in the industry.

"I have never made any statement regarding the Taylor murder except shortly after it happened, and I haven't had an attorney. I've been my own attorney."

In New York it was learned that Keyes had also made considerable checks to locate Edward F. Sands, the former valet of Taylor, who was at one time suspected of the murder. He also questioned a well-known motion picture star.

It was the result of Keyes' investigation in the East that led to the new questioning of Miss Berger.

"I cannot discuss the questioning of Miss Berger," said Mr. Fitts. "Mr. Keyes has the entire investigation in his hands and any information regarding that case must come from him. He will be in the East for a week or ten days yet."

* * * * *

March 20, 1926

LOS ANGELES HERALD

Boston--After a four day investigation in this city into the unsolved murder of William Desmond Taylor, moving picture director, in Hollywood, Cal., four years ago, District Attorney Asa Keyes of Los Angeles was on his way west today with information which he said "would shock the motion picture world and the country."

"We have discovered new and highly important evidence that has brought us to Boston and Brookline," said Keyes, "but until we locate and question Edward Sands, Taylor's missing Brookline butler, I can make no further revelations.

"We came here directly from New York as the result of what we were told by Mary Miles Minter, who was at Taylor's home a few hours before the murder.

"We are very anxious to see Mabel Normand, who was with Taylor just before he died, but she left New York before we arrived.

"We have examined New York and Philadelphia witnesses and will do further investigating in Chicago and Detroit before we return to Hollywood. On the secrecy of our investigation hinges our chances of locating Sands and bringing Taylor's slayer to justice." [2]

* * * * *

March 21, 1926

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Another Day, Another Clew

The rapidly shifting locale of Dist.-Atty. Keyes' efforts to obtain clews to the slaying of William Desmond Taylor, film director, yesterday brought Syracuse, N.Y., into the mysterious case.

Keyes, who has been in New York, Boston, Philadelphia and various other eastern cities, spent the day in Syracuse in consultation with detectives, but made no definite announcement other than that he intends continuing his investigations in Detroit and Chicago. The police of the New York city, however asserted that the identity of the slayer of Taylor will be announced in less than a week and that "Syracuse detectives will aid materially in the solution."

The Los Angeles District Attorney was met at the train in Syracuse by Detective Sergeant Bamrick, who remained with him until the prosecutor left for the West late last evening. Keyes stated that information in his possession will "shock the motion-picture world and the public."

From Boston, however, came a less veiled statement from Keyes where he announced with positiveness that the murder which for four years has been an unsolved mystery is "about to be cleared up."

"Investigations in Philadelphia and New York were completed before the Boston clews were investigated," declared Keyes. "The new and highly important developments unearthed here have placed a new aspect on the case. I can say this--the Taylor murder case will be cleared up within a fortnight. There is every chance that Taylor's slayer will be brought to justice. I cannot disclose the nature of the evidence obtained at Brookline, but it is more

important than I ever dreamed of obtaining."

Word came from Chicago last night that Keyes is thought to have come to the belief that Sands is to be found in Chicago or Detroit, and that belief is bringing him to the Illinois city.

Local officials of the District Attorney's office disclosed yesterday they know of no new developments in the case.

* * * * *

March 23, 1926

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Take it from Mabel Normand, she is the most willing little mystery murder witness in the world. Not only is she quite willing to be questioned, but she is about at the point where she will insist upon being interrogated.

That much was learned from her yesterday when she was informed that dispatches from Detroit quoted Dist.-Atty. Keyes as saying he intended to question Mabel in regard to the death of William D. Taylor as soon as he got back to Los Angeles.

Mabel sighed when she heard about the dispatch. A great weariness seemed to descend upon her. Then she spoke, as follows:

"Say, if I have to repeat this again, I'm going to set it to music to relieve the monotony. I've already committed it to memory, so here goes: I'm quite ready to be questioned by Mr. Keyes, now or at any other time. I'll tell him the same things I told Mr. Woolwine at the time of the murder, which was everything I know about the case. No one would like to see the mystery cleared up any more than I and no one will be more willing to co-operate to that extent.

"Now, please, that's all I can say--what more can I say?" declared Mabel and stretched out her arms expressively.

The motion-picture star read the eastern dispatches while on her set at the Hal Roach studio. Dressed in a raggedy Cinderella costume, a character that made her famous, it served to accentuate her attitude.

To be frank, Mabel says, life would be one grand, sweet song for her, so

to speak, if some one wasn't always dragging out the ghost of William Desmond Taylor and parading it before her.

"Here I am just getting started in pictures again, and then they begin it all over again," she says. "Oh, I hope Mr. Keyes is on the right track and that they settle it for good and all this time."

Mabel is quite willing to discuss the various phases of the case as she knows them. The night of the murder--

"I went over to his home to give him a scenario to read and he loaned me a book to read. Do I think there might have been another woman in the house all the time I was there? Oh, I don't think so!

"I never saw Sands, Taylor's secretary, but once. I know that Mr. Taylor left signed checks for Sands to fill out when he went on a trip. He must have had a lot of confidence in Sands to do that.

"But everything was so mysterious about Mr. Taylor. He was so well known, but yet so little known about him! Why I never dreamed that he had been married and had a grown daughter until it was learned after he died. And no one else seemed to know it either; at least, none of the people I knew.

"I never knew Mary Miles Minter very well. Mr. Taylor never said anything about her to me. I didn't see her when I was back East."

Taylor apparently had been in love with Miss Minter before becoming enamored with Miss Normand.

Despite adroit questioning, Mabel insisted that she had no pet theory of her own as to who might have murdered Taylor and why. However, she admitted that various articles of women's clothing found in his bungalow were interesting developments in the case. Also, that the slain director was a fascinating personality, well-read, a wide traveler and extremely interesting.

"So that's that," said Mabel, in conclusion. "I'll be here when Mr. Keyes gets back. I'm sorry he didn't find me in New York, but I didn't make any effort to avoid him. I didn't know he was making any efforts to find me or I would have gone to him."

* * * * *

March 23, 1926

LOS ANGELES RECORD

Chicago--The murder of William Desmond Taylor has narrowed down to two motives--"love and drugs" and the slayer may be in the clutches of the law within a very short time, Asa Keyes, prosecuting attorney of Los Angeles, told the United Press in an interview today.

"Our trip east," Keyes said, "has been wonderfully successful, and if our ideas at present pan out, we'll have the solution of the crime in a very short time.

"We have learned several things that have given the case an entirely different aspect, since we went east."

Keyes and H.L. Davis, chief of the homicide department of Los Angeles county state's attorney's office, stopped over here today after an extended trip to New York, during which time they questioned Mary Miles Minter and several other persons who they thought might know something of the crime.

"Miss Minter was very nice to us about answering questions, and I am sure that she is doing all in her power to help us in solving the case," Keyes said.

"We tried to get in touch with Mabel Normand while we were in New York, but we failed to do so. I have never yet been able to talk to Miss Normand but I want to.

When told by the United Press that Miss Normand had issued a statement on the coast to the effect that she had talked to "Keyes about ten times" about the case and had told him all she knew of it, but would gladly talk to him again, Keyes said:

"I never talked to Miss Normand about the William Desmond Taylor case in my life. But I am going to talk to her when I get back to Los Angeles.

"Either dope or love is behind the murder of Taylor," he said. "As yet we are not ready to make public what we know.

"We have brought the case down, little by little, to where it is and a short time ago we eliminated the 'perversion' angle which has bothered investigators since the murder. Now we know it is either dope or love."

Keyes and Davis leave here tonight for Traverse City, Mich., where the prosecutor will spend a few hours visiting with his mother. He will then return to Chicago, from where he will depart for the coast some time Thursday.

* * * * *

March 24, 1926

Delos Avery

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Chicago--Two Chicago men known from coast to coast in the film industry have been shadowed day and night for the last month by operatives of a national detective agency employed by Los Angeles authorities in connection with the mysterious murder of William Desmond Taylor, film director, who was shot to death in his Hollywood home four years ago, it was revealed tonight.

Both of these men were in Hollywood at the time of the murder. Both disappeared immediately after the murder. One of them not only disappeared, but changed his name.

Through information obtained by shadowing these men along the Chicago Rialto and on the North Side, plus information obtained in the motion picture world of the East, Asa Keyes, district attorney of Los Angeles, expects to solve the murder mystery.

Keyes and Harold L. Davis, head of his homicide bureau, held two conferences today with First Assistant States Attorney George E. Gorman of Cook County.

One of these conferences was a brief preliminary chat at the state's attorney's office. The other was a secret and prolonged consultation at night in a room in a Loop hotel.

Mr. Keyes tonight made a statement covering the following chief points:

- 1--That Mabel Normand, film actress, while not involved in the crime itself, does possess information of such importance that she will be called before the grand jury, if necessary, and asked to answer certain questions.
- 2--That Mary Miles Minter, a former film actress, whose name was linked with Taylor's after the tragedy, has recently aided Keyes in his

investigation. She will be further questioned when she returns to Los Angeles. She is now in New York.

In addition, it was revealed, the Chicago men under surveillance are vitally important to the case, as Mr. Keyes now sees it--so important that the shadowing will be continued indefinitely. They are regarded as being "material witnesses at least."

Neither Mr. Keyes nor Mr. Gorman would discuss the new Chicago phase of the investigation.

"Number one" of the two men under surveillance is a young man from the East, a member of a wealthy family. At the time of the murder he had been for some time a resident of Hollywood, where he was a hanger-on about the studios, occasionally holding some minor position--just enough to justify his presence. He liked the "atmosphere" of the film colony. He was fond of the night life. He was known as a "gay bird."

"Number two" was a much more important factor in the industry. He was a camera man, an expert technician, one of the best in the business. The ablest directors were all eager for his services.

Immediately after the murder these two men disappeared from Hollywood.

The movements of "number one" and "number two" have not been traced as yet in every detail, but it is known they have been in Chicago and connected with the film industry here since some time in 1924. Their movements since the opening of the new investigation are known, however, to the Los Angeles authorities.

Mr. Keyes stated positively he expects the complete solution of the mystery in the near future. In reply to a question as to what he believed to be the motive for the murder, he said:

"It may have been love. It may have been dope."

"If it was drugs, Mr. Keyes," said the questioner, "would that mean some connection between Taylor and the narcotic trade?"

"Perhaps--perhaps," Mr. Keyes said.

Mr. Keyes and Mr. Davis in their Eastern Investigation visited New York, Boston, Washington and Detroit before coming to Chicago. The progress they

have made is such, it was admitted, that grand jury action will be on the program as soon as they reach home.

It was admitted tonight one result of the investigation along new lines has been the elimination of Edward F. Sands from the field of inquiry. Sands was Taylor's valet. He has long been missing, but that fact is accounted for, the Los Angeles authorities say, by difficulties in which he was involved entirely aside from the murder case.

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March 24, 1926

LOS ANGELES RECORD

Interviewed by the United Press in New York today, Mary Miles Minter said:

"I am sorry, but I don't believe I should enter the discussion at this time. I prefer that anything concerning my recent talk with Mr. Keyes about the case come from Mr. Keyes himself. I thank you for the courtesy of inquiring."

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March 24, 1926

CHICAGO NEWS

A brief containing all the evidence in the William Desmond Taylor murder mystery has disappeared from the rooms of District Attorney Asa Keyes of Los Angeles in the Hotel LaSalle, it was learned today.

Harold L. Davis, the prosecutor's assistant, reported the disappearance to State's Attorney Robert E. Crowe as a case of theft, and accused five men. Crowe put Sergt. Thomas O'Malley, the chief of his police detail, on the case, and O'Malley began following up Keyes' suspicions. His first step was to question all employees of the hotel.

The theft wasn't inspired by any one under suspicion in the case, Davis said, but all hope of solving the murder mystery will be lost if the records aren't recovered.

"If they are destroyed, or if the contents become known, the case will be ruined," said Davis. "All the evidence we have assembled in a year of investigation, including the recent trip to New York and Boston, was in that bag."

Keyes had reached the point where he was hopeful of clearing up the mystery surrounding the murder of Taylor, a famous movie director. The evidence he had collected involved, though it did not implicate, Mary Miles Minter and Mabel Normand, actresses of whom Taylor was fond.

Keyes brought the stuff here yesterday, on his way back to Los Angeles, from a mysterious investigation in the east. Last night he left the briefcase with Davis, while he went to Traverse City, Mich., to visit his mother. This morning the case couldn't be found.

Sergt. O'Malley questioned the whole hotel staff about the case. Clerks, bellboys, porters, waiters, chambermaids--all persons who could have got into the room--were examined. Meanwhile Davis and men from the state's attorney's office were busy by telephone trying to reach persons suspected of knowledge of the vanished briefcase.

What the bag contains, no one but Keyes, Davis and the thieves know. Keyes and his assistant had refused to discuss their latest investigation. While admitting that they were on the trail of "something hot," they turned aside all questions. It is known that a long statement made by Mary Miles Minter was in the bag. Just what the actress said is a mystery, though it is presumed that she explained a letter found in Taylor's effects in which she had written "I love you--I love you--I love you."

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March 25, 1926

CHICAGO HERALD-EXAMINER

Several hours after police had begun search for a briefcase, stolen from a room of the Hotel LaSalle and said to contain evidence relied on to solve the four-year-old mystery of the murder of William Desmond Taylor, a messenger boy delivered the briefcase to the Hotel LaSalle information clerk.

The boy appeared with the stolen evidence shortly after 6 o'clock yesterday evening. He was immediately seized and questioned.

He could only explain, however, that the case had been put in his charge by a man who had called at the main office of the Postal Telegraph Company on Van Buren St. He had been instructed to deliver it at the hotel, he said.

The briefcase had been taken sometime yesterday from the hotel room of Asa Keyes, district attorney of Los Angeles, who was in Chicago investigating the possible connection of two men here with the Taylor murder.

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March 25, 1926

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Two prominent Angelenos whose names hitherto had not been mentioned in connection with the case were questioned yesterday by Chief Deputy District-Attorney Fitts and gave him some new information in the investigation being made into the East by Dist.-Atty. Keyes in the murder of William Desmond Taylor, motion-picture director, in Los Angeles four years ago.

The names of the two new witnesses, one a Los Angeles real-estate operator and the other an actor, were given to Fitts by Keyes, according to the former's statement. He declined to divulge their names, or the information supplied by them. [3]

Yesterday Fitts received from Chicago a telegram from Keyes in which the District-Attorney denied statements attributed to him in Chicago newspapers that he had solved the case; that the slayer and accomplice were under surveillance and their arrest awaited their indictment in Los Angeles.

Keyes and Davis are expected to leave Chicago today for Los Angeles, arriving here Monday when Fitts will go into conference with them and turn over to them the information he has gathered during their absence.

Fitts has been carrying on the investigation locally under the direction of Keyes, he said, and when Keyes returns he will give him everything he has obtained. During the local investigation five persons have been interrogated by Fitts, three of whom were questioned in earlier investigations.

"These witnesses furnished to me certain facts which were not known before and which I feel will prove of much value," Fitts declared. "Mr. Keyes is handling the case and I am working under his direction. Hence I am not at liberty to disclose the nature of this new information or the source."

Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, mother of Mary Miles Minter, the film actress who was questioned by Keyes at New York, will not be called to the District Attorney's office to be questioned until Keyes' return, Fitts said. Fitts added that he knows where Mrs. Shelby is and that she can be located whenever necessary.

According to dispatches received yesterday from Chicago, papers in the possession of Keyes and Davis were reported stolen from their hotel room. Davis declared later that the papers either were returned or mislaid as they now are in his possession. He was quoted as saying:

"If the papers were ever missing they have been returned and if they were I had no knowledge of it. Furthermore the papers were not vital to the Taylor case."

Davis also declared in another statement that while the investigation he and Keyes are making and which has taken them to Boston, New York and Detroit, has been marked by "satisfactory progress," he is unable to say whether the mystery will be solved.

Keyes' telegram to Fitts was a sweeping denial of published statements to the effect he knew the identity of the murderer four weeks ago and that the purpose of the eastern trip was to obtain corroborative evidence.

"My presence in Chicago was purely for the purpose of visiting your State's Attorney and to see how he handles criminal cases and to make train connections," Keyes was quoted in dispatches as saying. "Chicago has no connection whatever with the Taylor investigation and we are not shadowing the so-called 'hangers-on' of the Hollywood film colony in Chicago. These reports were absolutely false."

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March 25, 1926

Hollywood Woman Taylor Suspect

Chicago--After four years of investigation, some phases of it accomplished within the last few days in Chicago, a mass of circumstantial evidence has been collected that soon may result in the arrest of the slayer or slayers of William Desmond Taylor, Hollywood film director.

And with every addition made to the ascertained facts in the case, suspicion has been more directly focused on a woman--a woman who is well known in Hollywood, although not an actress.

This woman, it now develops, was the owner of a small automatic pistol, was known to be a good shot, and is said to have made death threats against Taylor.

Some of its evidence, it is said, also points toward a man known as a close friend of the woman.

This woman, it is reported, had a powerful motive, the strongest yet in the case.

During the long trail of evidence gathering followed by Attorney Keyes and Davis in Brooklyn, New York, Boston, Detroit and Chicago, the strange , almost inexplicable hatred of Taylor exhibited by the suspected slayer was encountered again and again, according to latest developments.

The woman about whom the circle of evidence is tightening is said to have threatened to kill Taylor a short time before he was murdered.

This woman also is said to have visited Taylor's home a few weeks before the slaying, carrying a revolver in her sleeve. [4]

Mr. Keyes declined to say whether he expected to ask for grand jury indictments immediately on his return to Los Angeles. He implied, however, that there are some additional angles to be run down before any movement is begun towards positive legal action.

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March 25, 1926

Morris Lavine

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

New evidence that a woman, not a motion picture actress plotted the murder of William Desmond Taylor, film director, has come into the possession of District Attorney Asa Keyes and his chief deputy, Buron Fitts, it was learned from reliable sources here yesterday. A witness who talked to this woman following the murder has been located.

Whether this woman actually committed the murder or whether a man did it at her suggestion and instigation has been the subject of the investigation of District Attorney Keyes in the East.

According to information said to be in possession of Keyes, this woman actually knew of the murder long before the police officers did and was highly nervous. She talked to a friend about it.

"Mr. Keyes will have to discuss this evidence," said Mr. Fitts yesterday, "as it is of such importance to the case that I do not feel at liberty to talk. All the statements must come from him."

Coincident with the announcement by Keyes that he will question Mary Miles Minter again, who has been of considerable assistance to him in the case and who will come to Los Angeles for that purpose, he also stated that he will question Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, mother of Mary Miles Minter, and also Miss Mabel Normand, film comedienne, who has also offered every assistance.

Mabel Normand, on the verge of hysterics, declared she was ready and willing at all times to assist the district attorney in his investigation.

Chief Deputy District Attorney Buron Fitts announced last night that he had received a telegram from District Attorney Asa Keyes instructing him to give out an authorized statement as to the position of the district attorney's office with reference to Miss Normand.

"Mr. Keyes has instructed me to say that Miss Normand at no time had any connection with the Taylor murder. She was exonerated by this office after a very thorough investigation of the case and the only things she knows are of a very minor nature and are very general. She has been put in a false position through rumors and innuendoes and gossip and this is indeed very unfortunate.

"I am sure that Miss Normand has told everything she knows about the case to Mr. Woolwine, my predecessor and I have been assured that she will gladly co-operate with me in every way in the solution of the case. This is further corroborated by her return to Los Angeles. Without disclosing the evidence in this case any further it is important that this statement be made in justice and fairness to Miss Normand."

Keyes probably will leave Chicago today and is due to return to Los Angeles by April 1.

At the home of Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, her daughter, sister of Mary Miles Minter, referred all questioners to Attorney G. Mott.

Last night Mr. Mott said:

"I have known Mrs. Shelby and the entire family for a long time and I am sure they are all ready and willing to help in every way to clear up the Taylor murder mystery. I do not know whether Mrs. Shelby was questioned at the time of the murder, but she was always willing to be of assistance in the case. I have not talked to her recently about it, as she naturally does not want to be harassed with a matter that is now four years old.

"I cannot say at this time what her attitude will be in regard to the desire of Mr. Keyes to question her, but I am sure she will help in every way in the case."

When told that Mary Miles Minter had made a statement in New York, Mr. Mott said:

"Mary is responsible for her own statements, and anyone who places any credence in them will likewise be held responsible."

* * * * *

March 25, 1926

Jack Carberry

LOS ANGELES RECORD

Just where the "Taylor case" stands today is as much a mystery as the four-year-old murder itself.

Known facts concerning Keyes' trip to eastern cities and his

investigation of the case are extremely interesting, however.

The district attorney left Los Angeles without informing the press of his intentions. However, rumors that he had gone to New York to question Miss Minter were circulated about his office.

These rumors were carried in news dispatches to New York. Upon Keyes' arrival at the Belmont hotel in that city he found 40 odd reporters waiting for him. Since that hour Keyes has been trailed constantly by newspaper men.

When the district attorney left Los Angeles he, like all of his staff, together with detectives and members of the sheriff's force who had worked on the "Taylor case" were of the opinion that Edward Sands, one-time valet for Taylor, had committed the murder.

At first Keyes denied that he had gone east in connection with the case. He insisted to reporters that he was in New York to study the methods used by District Attorney J. A. Banton of that city in handling criminal cases. He stated he was to make like studies in other eastern cities.

Davis, however, was credited by reporters with the statement that the Taylor case was under investigation. It later developed that Keyes had visited Miss Minter and had secured a signed statement from her.

This he mailed to Acting District Attorney Buron Fitts here. Fitts, working quietly, has interrogated several persons in connection with Miss Minter's statement.

Fitts, while he flatly refuses to discuss his investigation, is known to have proceeded along the following theory:

1--That a man--a paid assassin--fired the murder shot.

2--That the man was paid to do the deed by a woman, who, although not a motion picture actress herself, was deeply interested in a screen star who was in love with Taylor.

That the man who fired the shot may have been Sands, the valet, who has never been seen since the afternoon following the slaying, is quite possible.

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March 25, 1926

LOS ANGELES HERALD

Harold L. Davis, assistant to the district attorney, refused to discuss the case today.

"Please remember that neither Mr. Keyes nor I have been quite so silly as to give out all of the so-called important information which has been attributed to us," he said. "After we had been east about three weeks they 'hung' a fresh investigation of the Taylor case on us. I have never admitted it. Mr. Keyes may have. Murderers are not caught with brass bands."

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March 26, 1926

Morris Lavine

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Blonde Hairs Clew in Taylor Case

Two strands of blonde hair were found on the body of William Desmond Taylor, film director, shortly after he was discovered murdered at his South Alvarado street home on February 1, 1922, and have been safeguarded by the district attorney's office ever since that time, it was learned yesterday.

The strands of hair were found by Detective Ed King, who was placed in charge of the investigation by District Attorney Thomas Lee Woolwine at that time.

They have formed the basis of the new investigation by District Attorney Asa Keyes and Chief Deputy District Attorney Buron Fitts, in the nation-wide search for the slayer, and new evidence regarding him.

Coupled with the other evidence in the possession of the district attorney's office, the strands of hair seemed to indicate to the investigators that a woman may have committed the murder or been present when the fatal shot was fired. Further check along this line is now being made.

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March 26, 1926

Jack Carberry

District Attorney Asa Keyes' investigation of the murder of William Desmond Taylor is to be investigated.

This startling development in the sensational four-year-old slaying became known today. It was learned that the 1926 grand jury had already secretly made plans to bring the district attorney before it upon his return to Los Angeles from his trip to New York, New Haven, Bridgeport, Boston, Philadelphia, Detroit, Chicago, Traverse City and Kansas City.

The jury's intention of asking Keyes and his aide, Harold L. (Buddy) Davis, to explain their eastern trip, and to show the necessity of the journey, followed published statements from the two men now in Chicago in which Keyes was quoted as declaring the "Taylor case is solved," and attributing to Davis the declaration that "at no time have I ever so much as admitted we have been investigating the Taylor case."

The jury's action will be in keeping with its announced policy of interesting itself in all questions of public moment. Keyes, it was learned, will not be formally called but the jury will expect him to offer a full explanation of his trip, its cost and the necessity of making the investigation. He can do this at the same time he presents his evidence upon which, he has already announced, he hopes to secure an indictment.

That Keyes, upon his return, will ask the jury to return an indictment against Edward Sands, once the valet for Taylor, appears certain. It was known that Keyes had been in telephonic communication with persons friendly to him here and had so stated.

Whether Keyes, on his journey east, has gathered sufficient evidence to warrant a further indictment of a woman now believed to have either hired or inspired Sands to commit the murder is not known. As far as could be learned today Keyes' evidence is of a purely circumstantial nature and is based largely upon the suspicions of an actress now in New York.

Upon telegraphic orders from Keyes, Acting District Attorney Buron Fitts yesterday called before him Chauncey Eaton, chauffeur for Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, mother of Mary Miles Minter, whose love notes written to Taylor were

found among his effects following the murder.

The investigation now being conducted is but a continuation of the theory known to have been held by Woolwine when he was in office and at the time of the killing. However, Woolwine was convinced the evidence available would never warrant an indictment against anybody unless Sands could be taken into custody and made to "talk."

Keyes, in Traverse City, Mich., where he had gone to visit his mother, said:

"I have talked all I am going to talk on the Taylor case and its solution. There will be nothing more said until after I return to Los Angeles and present the facts to the grand jury. We have made several important discoveries."

Davis, in Chicago, where he "lost" the evidence in the case, only to find it again an hour later, admitted he was "hopping mad." It is Davis' belief that a Chicago newspaperman was responsible for the "theft" of the evidence. The reporter, who had interviewed Keyes and Davis the night before the "theft" wrote for his paper:

"Davis, patting a well-filled brief case which he carried under his arm, smiled and said: 'The evidence is here--and it would make interesting reading.' "

The reporter then succeeded in getting the "interesting reading," Davis believes.

As a result of his experience, Davis today flatly refused to have anything more to do with newspaper men.

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March 26, 1926

SAN FRANCISCO CALL

Los Angeles--Virtually all of the evidence in the William Desmond Taylor murder mystery has disappeared from the office of District Attorney Asa Keyes, it was learned today. Including in the missing documents is the dramatic statement of Mary Miles Minter, former motion picture star, stating her

undying love for the slain director.

The statement of Miss Minter, made to former District Attorney Thomas Lee Woolwine and for a long time the crux in the investigation of the murder, has been missing for many weeks, Ed King, investigator for the district attorney's office, admitted.

With the statement of Miss Minter, which consisted of hundreds of typewritten pages in book form, there also had disappeared a stack of fervent love notes, which the actress wrote to Taylor. These notes were found hidden in one of the director's riding boots after the murder.

"I don't know what became of this evidence," said King today. "All I know is that it is missing and that after the first investigation of the case had died down persons interested in Miss Minter made strenuous efforts to get it from us."

King also admitted that other evidence in the case has disappeared. He declined to state of what this additional missing evidence consisted.

"We still have the bullet that killed Taylor, the suit of clothes he wore when he was killed and the statements of several witnesses," said King, "but a large part of the evidence gathered at the time the crime was first investigated has vanished."

Indictments in the case, it was said, might be returned, but the chances for conviction were said to be extremely slight in view of the missing papers.

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March 27, 1926

Morris Lavine

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Poison Death Plans Laid by Woman

Startling evidence that the woman--not a motion picture actress--suspected of plotting the murder of William Desmond Taylor, film director, told a close friend that she would never be taken alive to the district attorney's office for questioning, and inquired from a nurse what poisons she could use to end her life quickly, if necessary, has come into the possession

of the district attorney's office.

Bert Cohen, chief investigator for the district attorney, yesterday directed his aides to find an important witness relating to this new development in the case.

Every effort is being made to locate the witness before District Attorney Keyes returns.

It was learned yesterday in dispatches from New York that Mary Miles Minter in a recent statement to District Attorney Keyes asserted that she had heard threats to kill Taylor some months previous to his death.

The data which former District Attorney Thomas Lee Woolwine collected during his tenure in office, including the letters of Mary Miles Minter, are not missing, as reported, according to district attorney's office detectives.

But the evidence that is missing--two silken strands of blonde hair--is considered of the utmost importance. It has been stated that if the suspected murderer is ever publicly named and brought to trial the hair would be one of the foundations of the state's case.

That they were a vital link in the chain of evidence was admitted by officers, as witnesses established the point that Taylor never wore a suit of clothes more than one day at a time and that his valet pressed his clothes and cleaned his suit every day.

The suit he had on that day had been thoroughly cleaned the day before and it is the belief of officers that the hair belonged to the person who committed the murder.

It was stated at the police station that the two strands of blonde hair which were found on Taylor's coat and which are linked with the hair of the murderer, were placed in an envelope and locked in the police safe, with instructions to keep them specially guarded.

When Davis became chief of the homicide department Keyes instructed him to go to the police station and get all the documents on the case and the evidence.

Davis obtained several statements and Taylor's suit of clothes, and put them in the district attorney's safe. The clothes showed that Taylor had been

shot from a distance no further than one inch from his body, the bullet passing through his chest.

The strands of hair were sought, but could not be located at this time.

On his return to Los Angeles Keyes will interrogate several persons in connection with the evidence obtained in the East. If the evidence warrants, he will take the case before the county grand jury. At the Hall of Justice yesterday, efforts to make political capital out of Keyes' trip were scoffed at. It is in full accord with the District Attorney in his investigation, and is working harmoniously with the District Attorney's office.

Members of the grand jury stated that the only investigation they will take up in connection with the Taylor murder is such evidence as Keyes may present to them regarding the murder.

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March 27, 1926

LOS ANGELES RECORD

Omaha--Nursing a grudge for everybody east of the Rocky Mountains, District Attorney Asa Keyes passed through here today en route to Los Angeles, where he will continue his investigation into the death of William Desmond Taylor, movie director.

Keyes was especially peeved at Chicago and Chicago newspaper men. "I'm sure glad I got out of that burg," he said. "It's a terrible place."

* * * * *

March 27, 1926

LOS ANGELES RECORD

Taylor Slaying Theory of Mary Minter is Told

With District Attorney Asa Keyes and his chief assistant, Harold L. (Buddy) Davis, speeding homeward following their search for evidence in connection with the four-year-old murder of William Desmond Taylor, chief interest in the revival of California's most sensational slaying lay today in the contents of a statement made by Mary Minter to the district attorney while

in New York.

Miss Minter, who left "the pictures" immediately after Taylor was found slain, frankly expressed her "theory" of the crime.

Miss Minter, in her statement, it became known today, believes that Sands, enraged at the loss of his position; possessed of a criminal's mind, always bent on revenge' unscrupulous and willing to do anything for money, became a tale bearer.

The girl, at that time, frankly admits she was paying visits to the director's home.

That Sands carried the tales of these visits to a woman, enlarging upon what was occurring; telling tales of wild parties--and in all probability the whispers of love upon which he had eavesdropped, is Miss Minter's belief.

This woman wanted to keep Miss Minter away from Taylor, the former actress told Keyes.

And now Keyes believes one of two things happened:

1. That Sands, believing he would receive a rich reward, killed Taylor of his own initiative, depending upon the woman mentioned by Miss Minter to reward him.

2. That he acted as a paid assassin, securing a stipulated fee, part of which he used to flee to a foreign land.

But every iota of Keyes' case is known to be circumstantial.

Following her retirement Miss Minter entered into a series of disputes with her mother, Mrs. Charlotte Shelby. The former actress, who, while making her home apart from her mother, instituted an accounting action in the local courts seeking to secure large sums of money which, she claimed, she had earned, but which, she said, she had never received.

It was learned that Miss Minter's mother, at the time of the murder, employed private detectives and attorneys in an effort to locate the slayer. Checks revealed that she had spent many thousand dollars in an independent search for the slayer in an effort to eliminate her daughter's name from the case.

It was also learned today that the "theory" of Miss Minter, as told to

Keyes, in New York, was often expressed here. [5]

One night, before leaving Los Angeles, police were called to her neighborhood by residents who had objected to Miss Minter's prize dogs being allowed to run at liberty. The officers responded together with a newspaper man, were invited into Miss Minter's apartment.

There she told, in detail, the "theory" which she repeated to Keyes in New York.

Both Mrs. Shelby and Miss Minter's sister, Mrs. Margaret Fillmore, had also been informed of the former actress' "theory."

Assistant Captain William M. Cahill, one of the officers who originally worked on the case, has an entirely different opinion. He "strings with" the love-jealousy motive.

Cahill thinks that one of Taylor's feminine admirers, hopelessly in love with him, watched the bungalow, saw Mabel Normand leave, went into an emotional rage, knew that Taylor was alone, and then stepped into the living room, took a gun from her handbag and fired the fatal shot.

Cahill declares he believes the woman then ran out the front door, in between the adjoining garage and the house and disappeared in the dark shadows enveloping Alvarado Terrace.

* * * * *

March 27, 1926

LOS ANGELES EXPRESS

A new and sensational angle of the William Desmond Taylor murder case developed today when a New York newspaper printed a story that a prominent Los Angeles society woman faces indictment.

According to the United Press, the New York Graphic today printed a copyrighted story about the society woman.

The United Press quotes from this story as follows:

"The motive for her crime was mad jealousy, aroused when the director transferred his friendship from her to Mary Miles Minter, young and beautiful motion picture star.

"The society woman before mentioned in connection with the many investigations into the mystery was an almost daily visitor at the luxurious Hollywood home of the director until shortly before the murder."

The woman, "not a moving picture actress," has figured prominently in the investigation since Taylor was found dead in his bungalow, February, 1922. Whether she will be questioned again is unannounced, since Keyes has stopped talking and started traveling again.

Reports credited to Investigator Eddie King, of the district attorney's office, that Mary Miles Minter's love notes and statements in the Taylor case were missing, were punctured and flattened by the investigator.

"Just an ordinary lie," laughed King. "No truth in it. Neither did I make any such announcement. The notes are safely in the possession of the proper authorities."

Meanwhile at the Hall of Justice, reports tenaciously held that District Attorney Keyes and Harold L. Davis, his assistant, who accompanied the official, will have to make a complete accounting for the trip which caused a national flurry over contradictory reports credited to the pair regarding the Taylor mystery.

First they denied they were working on the case. Then they reported "satisfactory progress." Then came a hail of announcements on the case, which were climaxed when they declared the famous mystery solved. But "Buddy" Davis, the aide, lost his suitcase, said to contain the solution, for a few hours and he became angry at newspaper men. The upshot was that Keyes and Davis both denied the whole thing and then shut up entirely.

Now they're both coming straight home, more or less cloaked in secrecy.

Of Keyes, near and about his own office, it was admitted that "Ace talked too much."

* * * * *

March 28, 1926

Morris Lavine

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

In the files of the District Attorney's office is a diary, recently discovered, which is said to contain highly valuable information regarding a woman, not a motion picture actress, suspected of plotting the murder of William Desmond Taylor, the film director.

How this diary came into the possession of the District Attorney is not known. But its contents are said to reveal the movements of a certain society matron at different times before Taylor's murder, the day of the crime, and all subsequent. [6]

The diary is being guarded with the utmost care, to be turned over to District Attorney Asa Keyes upon his return to Los Angeles Monday or Tuesday.

The data furnished in the diary now in the possession of the District Attorney's office dovetails with other statements secretly obtained during the past two months by Keyes and his assistants.

Keyes, on his return to Los Angeles, will question several persons in addition to those already seen in the case. These will include a nurse to which a woman, not an actress, is said to have inquired regarding various poisons and to whom this woman is said to have stated that she would never be taken alive.

In the East Keyes announced that he will question Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, mother of Mary Miles Minter, and will ask her several questions on which she may throw some light. He is bringing back with him a statement by Mary Miles Minter.

Mrs. Shelby, the mother, was located yesterday by The Examiner on a plantation several miles from Bastrop, La., where she went to settle up an estate involving the property of her mother, who died recently.

* * * * *

March 29, 1926

LOS ANGELES TIMES

On board Union Pacific Los Angeles Limited (Milford, Utah)--The well-known Taylor murder mystery, after 5000 miles of travel and 500,000 words of news dispatches, is coming home to roost.

It is approaching the California State line in the form of Dist.-Atty. Keyes and his chief homicide deputy, Davis, to say nothing of the brief case containing the Taylor case documents, recently made famous by its amazing theft and miraculous recovery in Chicago.

Deputy Davis, custodian of the case, proudly exhibited his trust in all its cowhide glory, but when asked if the Taylor case had been solved, as reported, exclaimed, "so's your old man."

Mr. Keyes, who was looking out of the window on the cold snow-covered hills, entered a general denial to the statements accredited to him by eastern dispatches. The 5000-mile transcontinental jaunt can be salvaged through a county expense voucher, but the half million-odd words printed on the case and attributed to him appear to be a total loss.

After reading the batch of eastern stories crediting him with all sorts of things said and unsaid, Mr. Keyes consented to make a statement of facts for the Los Angeles Times. He said:

"Some of the eastern news dispatches attributed to me and Mr. Davis are so ridiculous and self-contradictory on their face that no categorical denials are necessary. I have been grossly misquoted and many statements were put in my mouth that did not emanate from me. Some of these dispatches came from cities many miles away from my presence at that time. It is unfortunate that the natural anxiety of some reporters to obtain something new on a world-famous case should go that far...

"So far as the Taylor case is concerned, from the public point of view it is one of the most spectacular and sensational mysteries in years. From a purely legal point of view, it is a case requiring the most painstaking effort and careful preparation. While in New York I interviewed Mary Miles Minter, one of the witnesses in the case, and have her statement with me.

"Some investigation regarding the whereabouts of Edward F. Sands also was necessary. These things had to be done as a legal necessity in our efforts to round out a case and put it into shape to be presented before the proper judicial bodies, should sufficient evidence eventually be obtained. All this was done with satisfactory results.

"While in Chicago no work was done on the Taylor case. No interviews were taken and no witnesses were seen. Our efforts in Chicago were along the lines of investigating the District Attorney's office for ideas to put into effect in Los Angeles.

"As to Miss Minter's statement and as to the other information gathered from witnesses, nothing at this time warrants the statement that we know the murderer of William Desmond Taylor, and at no time has any such claim been made by me or by Mr. Davis.

"In view of the extraordinary amount of publicity, most of it very unfortunate and far from the truth, I do not feel that much additional progress can be made at this time in the orderly reconstruction of the case, and unless some spontaneous occurrence changes my plans no immediate action is expected."

The theft of the Taylor case documents and all the circumstances surrounding it will be told the grand jury by Mr. Keyes, the District Attorney and Mr. Davis declared.

None of the documents are missing, but the lock on the brief case was jimmied and contents taken out and examined, according to Mr. Davis. He was out to supper and left the case in the room at the hotel in Chicago. In the morning, when he discovered the loss of the documents, he at once instituted a search for them. Investigation showed that while he was away two men obtained and pass-key from the hotel clerk and entered the room.

The next day Mr. Davis and Mr. Keyes learned that some of the documents were taken by the thieves to a Chicago newspaper office and examined. The case was returned while Mr. Davis was in conference with some Chicago officials. Nothing was missing.

"The most important evidence in the case was not in the bag, when it was stolen," Mr. Davis said, as the train rolled across the Utah valley. "By some act of providence we had transferred the important papers to another place. However, it is very unfortunate the contents of some of the papers were indirectly given publication and used as quotations from Mr. Keyes and myself." [7]

Some of the cities in which they were reported were never visited by Mr. Keyes and Mr. Davis, they said tonight. The two officials said they visited Chicago, New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Detroit and Syracuse, N.Y.

When the limited train came to a stop at the Union Pacific station in the Utah capital, the two Los Angeles officials were met by newspaper men and shown the clippings of stories published on the Taylor case since their trip east. Five thick envelopes, containing dozens of front-page stories with glaring headlines, and attributing all sorts of interesting but conflicting statements to Mr. Keyes and Mr. Davis, were among the exhibits.

Both immediately and heatedly denied that they had said most of the things credited to them.

* * * * *

March 29, 1926
Jack Carberry
LOS ANGELES RECORD

While Keyes has been in the east, it was learned today, private investigation into the Taylor murder, resumed here, revealed that Sands, within three days after Taylor was slain, left San Pedro aboard ship as a steward, sailing for China. Sands, it was learned, told a woman known to police as "Marie" that he was going to spend the remainder of his life in Havana. Before leaving he gave the woman, "Marie," a large sum of money without offering an explanation of where he had secured.

Whether Sands has remained in Cuba since the slaying is not known. There were no developments in the case today.

* * * * *

March 30, 1926
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Dist.-Atty. Keyes and Harold L. Davis, his chief homicide deputy, arrived in Los Angeles yesterday afternoon, after an extended trip through eastern cities and considerable publicity over the reported solution of the William

Desmond Taylor murder case.

A small army of newspaper reporters and photographers met the two officials on their arrival at the Central Station. There was a clicking of cameras and some milling around, but nothing new was added to the facts already known in the investigation.

The murder investigation activity, if any, in the news few months will be directed toward reassembling and co-ordinating material at hand, Mr. Keyes and Mr. Davis said.

A study of the transcript of the statement made to them in New York by Mary Miles Minter, Taylor's former sweetheart, will be made by Mr. Keyes and Mr. Davis. They also plan to check over the known facts in the murder case to see how much credence is to be placed in the story of a former convict, given them in a New York State city, during their eastern visit. This story is a reputed "second-handed" confession of a man who says that while he was serving a term in an eastern prison a fellow convict told him that he and another man had killed Taylor. The man is said to be a narcotic peddler.

His motive was described as an old grudge against Taylor, grown from a trifling episode years ago. The description of the self-asserted murderer, as given by the convict, is said to answer in a general way the man seen leaving the Taylor home immediately after the shooting in February, 1922.

* * * * *

March 31, 1926

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Louisiana justice disappointed Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, mother of Mary Miles Minter, yesterday. It prevented her from obtaining the whole of an estate of gas lands reputed to be worth \$1,400,000 and gave half of the estate to a niece.

The estate was left by Mrs. Julia B. Miles, grandmother of Mary Miles Minter. Mrs. Miles died recently. It consisted of 1400 acres of valuable gas lands in the Monroe, La., gas belt.

The will was contested by Mrs. Hazel Jordan of Mobile, Ala., who

announced she was fighting for the share of her deceased mother, who was Mrs. Shelby's sister.

Mrs. Shelby hastened from Los Angeles to Bastrop, La., to attend the hearing and oppose the efforts of her niece to obtain a half share in the land.

A verdict by the District Court in Bastrop, county seat of Morehouse Parish, awarded Mrs. Jordan half of the estate yesterday.

Mrs. Shelby left immediately for New York.

* * * * *

June 2, 1926
LOS ANGELES HERALD

A formal statement by Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, mother of Mary Miles Minter, erstwhile screen beauty, regarding her knowledge of the mysterious circumstances which led to the murder of William Desmond Taylor in 1922, rested today in the files of District Attorney Asa Keyes, the latter announced.

The statement is the first ever made by Mrs. Shelby in the history of the case.

Mrs. Shelby was questioned to sift the statements made by Miss Minter to Keyes in New York recently, the prosecutor said. Miss Minter's close friendship with Taylor, which she freely admitted after his death and which was confirmed by a long series of love letters between the couple, filed as evidence in the case, was discussed by Keyes and Mrs. Shelby.

Mrs. Shelby's statement will be kept confidential, Keyes said. He also declared himself satisfied with its contents.

April 9, 1922
Thoreau Cronyn
NEW YORK HERALD

The Truth About Hollywood, Concluded

Part 5 [How Much Do the Stars Earn?]

In the old days it was the habit of some producers and their press agents to exaggerate for publication the salaries of their stars, but the chastening of Hollywood has brought about a realization that this was a silly business--bad for the star, bad for his associates, bad for the whole industry.

How much do the picture players get? In many instances it is impossible to learn the real figures. They are a secret between the star and the one or two individuals with whom the contract was made. This secrecy has enabled the imaginative actor and publicity man to soar as high as they pleased without challenge. Also the methods of payment are so diverse as to make estimation of amounts difficult. Some players have a weekly drawing account and a percentage of the profits. Some get a flat weekly salary under yearly or long term contract. Some are paid by the week for the period required for the making of the picture; when the picture is finished the salary stops. Some of the biggest stars produce their own pictures and take all the profit or loss, as the case may be. Of these some finance their own productions and others are financed by the corporations which distribute the films.

One thing is certain and that is within the last year there has been a marked lowering of salaries throughout the motion picture ranks, amounting in some instances to more than 50 per cent. A sage of Hollywood thus summarized the present salary situation:

"This is an El Dorado for a few, a grub stake for many and a Dead Man's Gulch for many others. I know well-known actors and actresses whose salaries appear to be fabulous but who would be better off if they had steady jobs at \$100 a week. One of these is a leading woman who gets \$500 a week. That sounds like \$25,000 a year. The fact is that the moment a picture is finished she gets nothing, and sometimes she is idle for months between pictures. I know a star who has a Packard car but no money to buy gasoline. A leading woman with a male star got \$200 a week for four weeks and then nothing for four months.

Sometimes a player of a striking type is catapulted into prominence by one picture, but then she can't find another picture suitable to her peculiar personality and she is out of a job for five months."

The highest paid players on continuous weekly salary were Mary Pickford, Charley Chaplin and Douglas Fairbanks, all of whom are now producing on their own account. William S. Hart, whose salary was \$2,000 a week, has also become a producer. A famous opera singer made three pictures and received \$50,000 for each of them. The highest paid salaried actor in Hollywood at the present time, according to information given me, is Mary Miles Minter. I was told that her contract with Famous Players-Lasky calls for five pictures at the graded rate of \$30,000, \$40,000, \$50,000, \$60,000 and \$70,000 a picture. She has made her last production, so that roughly she has earned \$250,000 a year. Another top salaried celebrity is Pauline Frederick. She had a contract at \$7,500 a week, but I was told that when retrenchment set in she acquiesced in a reduction to \$3,000 a week. Betty Compson, on a five year contract at \$2,000 a week, also accepted a reduction. I also heard that Wallace Reid had been reduced from \$1,750 to \$1,250 a week, but this, in view of the fact that he is now one of the greatest drawing cards at the film theaters, seems improbable.

Rodolph Valentino, who has recently found great demand for his services, has just signed a contract with Famous Players-Lasky at \$1,00 a week for the first year, \$2,000 for the second and \$3,000 for the third. Harold Lloyd gets a lump sum for each picture and a percentage of the profits over a certain sum. His personal fortune is estimated at \$350,000.

The public has an impression that Charley Chaplin is under contract at "a million a year." The fact is that the distributor, First National Pictures, agreed to pay him \$1,000,000 for eight pictures, and it has taken him five years to make them. This makes his average return only \$125,000 a picture and \$200,000 a year. Out of this Chaplin pays the cost of production, averaging about \$60,000 a picture. At this rate his net return per picture is \$65,000, with income tax to be deducted. I suppose he also has a percentage interest in the distributor's profits, which would swell the sum considerably, but even so Hollywood knows that Chaplin's fortune is not what it is generally thought to

be. He takes his time in turning out one of his comedies. He is tired of slapstick and meringue pies and doesn't care who knows it, and stays away from his studio as much as possible while the expense mounts up just the same. The dog that he used in filming "A Dog's Life" grew from puppy-hood to maturity before the picture was done. Toward the end they had to fake--that is, to place the camera further away in order to make the dog appear to be the same size as when the production was started.

What Mary Pickford makes is a secret among herself, her mother, who is her business manager, and the income tax bureau. It does not amount to \$1,000,000 a year. Friends in Hollywood believe that recently she and her husband have each been netting about \$500,000. After fifteen years on the legitimate and movie stage Miss Pickford is worth about \$3,000,000. She is a wise investor. Fairbanks is not a great saver, or has not been up to this time. He spends enormous sums on his productions. "The Three Musketeers" cost not far from \$750,000.

Conrad Nagel, one of the newer leading men of considerable experience on the legitimate stage, has a salary of \$750 a week. This is above the leading man's average, the reason being that Nagel not only can act but looks like an aristocrat. Katherine MacDonald has her own company and gets \$50,000 a picture from First National. Mabel Normand got at one time \$4,000 a week. I don't know what her present contract with Mack Sennett calls for. Here are some actual figures that were given me under pledge that the names would not be used:

A well known star, a homely man who does homely, heart interest stories but is not just new in the pictures, had a two year contract at \$2,000 a week. A well known character man, in constant demand, works by the picture at \$2,000 and \$3,000 a week. A leading woman who is popular with the public receives \$400 a week, but misses a good many weeks between pictures. A noted character actor ranked as a star is paid \$1,500 or \$2,000 a week. A featured leading woman under a five year contract gets \$450 a week the year round. A man who has been before the camera only a year but has a thorough stage training is under contract at \$500 a week. A juvenile lead gets \$250 a week, with provision for an annual increase. A seventeen-year-old ingenue, one year in

the pictures, draws \$150 a week. A character woman in steady demand for "grand dame" parts gets \$100 a week on a long term contract: character man playing small parts \$75.

The salaries of stock players under contract range as a rule from \$125 to \$500 a week. It takes an exceptional man or woman to rise above \$500. Fancy salaries are often paid to outsiders engaged to play leads with the regular stock companies. Salaries also vary with the prosperity of the producer and sometimes depend on his personal whim. The present tendency is away from the fancy salary and toward standardization. The day of the \$5,000 a week star is passing. The players are also being held to stricter studio discipline. Contracts are being drawn so as to compel the player to give undivided attention to work and to discourage costly vacillations due to temperament or big head.

In writing of salaries I have not taken account of the swarm of others besides the leading actors who have to do with the studios. A few directors' salaries go as high as \$2,000 and \$3,000 a week, really good ones being rarer than really good actors. William Desmond Taylor, who was murdered, got \$1,250. He was regarded as an "uneven performer." Some of his pictures were masterpieces; others mediocre. A director's salary is commonly around \$500 a week.

Players of small parts, who may appear only once and then get killed off, are paid by the day, \$15 and up. The extra people get from \$5 to \$15 a day, the customary rate being \$7.50, and the "atmosphere"--persons with no training, who add numbers or color to mob scenes--\$3 a day. The best camera men receive \$200 a week. Many of them float from studio to studio, but some of the directors and players insist on having the same one for each picture. Mary Pickford always calls for Charles Rosher, as he has proved that he best knows how to attain the effects she desires.

Do the actors save anything? Bankers of Hollywood told me that the number of those who do is larger than might be supposed. Charley Chaplin is credited with having the largest deposits. He has a cash balance of \$300,000 in one of the Hollywood banks. The returns from each of his pictures are credited to

separate accounts. His financial man is his secretary. William S. Hart and Pauline Frederick are among the many others who make regular deposits and fewer withdrawals. The spendthrifts are like so many Coal Oil Johnnies. Without training in the use of money, without taste or imagination, they fling their dollars along the line of least resistance. They overdress, they give garish parties, they put special bodies on the most expensive automobiles (Arbuckle's \$25,000 chariot was inlaid with gold), they repair between pictures to the Tia Juana race track, just across the Mexican line, and go broke.

I had supposed before going to Hollywood that any star possessing less than nine automobiles was ostracized, but I heard of none with more than four. Chaplin, as heretofore mentioned, has two; Mary Pickford two, Betty Compson two, Harold Lloyd four, one of them a Ford. Lloyd lives in Los Angeles with his father and brother and sister-in-law and their baby. His servants are a cook, valet and chauffeur.

Mary Pickford supports a children's home in Los Angeles with the proceeds of her photographs, which her secretary sends to applicants upon payment of 25 cents. Fairbanks never drinks intoxicants. He smokes a pipe when he feels like it. No liquor is served in their home except at formal dinners. They are rarely seen at social affairs. In the evening they see a new film in their own home. Charley Chaplin drops in and plays the violin. Fairbanks amuses the guests with a new acrobatic stunt and when the guests are gone reads history and biography to familiarize himself with the requirements of his next picture.

Charles Ray, who married out of the profession (Mrs. Ray sings and paints), has two automobiles. He has the reputation of being one of Hollywood's hardest workers, but is seen at an occasional garden party in the summer. His father was a conductor on the Santa Fe. The jovial Tom Mix has a fortune in fancy hatbands and spurs and drives a wicked car. One of his friends described it: "A cross between a battleship and Sousa's band, with his name on the door, like Painless Parker."

Eric von Stroheim has three automobiles, as has Priscilla Dean, who lives

in the Hollywood foothills.

I promised to report on the night life of Hollywood. As indicated, the streets are pastorally quiet. The two big social mob scenes are the Tuesday night dance at the Ambassador, between Hollywood and Los Angeles, and the Thursday night dance at the Hollywood Hotel. The latter was rather jamboreeish at one time, but has been denatured. The Ambassador dance will be mentioned later. The real cutups go to such places as the Sunset Inn on the road to Santa Monica, miles from Hollywood. Two rather noted actresses played a game of strip poker there last summer but at the next to the last moment an actor in policeman's uniform rushed in and arrested them. The Ship, an eating place in Venice, on the ocean, is also well patronized. No liquor is sold on the premises, I was solemnly assured, but in this bootlegger's paradise that need be no deterrent. Hollywood itself, in addition to a few restaurants, only one of which is open all night, has a few tearooms and that exhausts the list.

There is space only for a brief listing of some of Hollywood's many fine activities in which the screen workers share. In the Bowl, a natural amphitheater seating 5,500 persons, outdoor spectacles are staged, and the Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra will give forty concerts next summer with the admission fee only 25 cents. There is a community theater, organized and managed by Neely Dickson, where have been seen scores of one act plays written by such authors as Lord Dunsany, Bernard Shaw, Lady Gregory, William Butler Yeats, John Masefield, Sir James M. Barrie and Stephen Phillips. The best of the legitimate players drawn to the studios of Hollywood have taken part. Every night during the summer the Pilgrimage Play, based on the life of Christ, is given in a canyon in the foothills at prices ranging from 50 cents to \$2. The spirit of the town is suggested by the fact that the Board of Supervisors appropriated \$20,000 a year for three years for the support of this undertaking. Many beds in Los Angeles hospitals are maintained by movie persons.

Up in the hills Mrs. Annie Besant presides over the Krotona Institute of Theosophy. Some of the churches of Hollywood, notably the Christian Science, Unitarian and Methodist are particularly attractive. The roll of Christian

Science members is a movie who's who. Witness: Bob Ellis and his wife, May Allison; Mr. and Mrs. Tully Marshall, Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Hatton, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Graves, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ogle, Paul Scardon and his wife, Betty Blythe; Mr. and Mrs. Jack Holt, Richard Dix, Miss Leatrice Joy, Miss Helen Ferguson, Miss Helen Jerome Eddy, Miss Lillian Leighton, Miss Shannon Day, Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Nagel, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Franklin and Mr. and Mrs. King Vidor. All the children of C.B. and W.C. De Mille attend the Christian Science Sunday School.

Then there is the Screen Writers Guild. It is a distinctly cheering institution. Before going to Hollywood I had never heard of it except through a newspaper announcement that it had offered a reward of \$1,000 to the capture and conviction of the Taylor murderer.

"That's the crowd that gave the big dinner a while ago, the Writers Cramp," an outlander told me. So it is, and much more. It is a flourishing alliance of the men and women of a new profession--the writers of stories and scenarios for the motion pictures. It is an offspring of the Authors League of America, born two years ago at a meeting in the home of Thompson Buchanan, whom theatergoers remember for "A Woman's Way" and other plays of the legitimate stage.

It strives to get adequate recognition for the screen writer, to cooperate with the Authors League in improving copyright laws, to make sounder the contracts of writers and producers and to ply visiting celebrities with food and moral entertainment. It has in Hollywood a \$30,000 clubhouse, for which it is paying by the month, without missing an installment thus far. It dispelled forever the impression that writers are poor business men by making a profit of \$6,647.54 from its first annual dinner, the Writers Cramp, held in December in the Ambassador Hotel.

It has succeeded in settling out of court disputes between producers and writers, so that now its services as arbiter is sought even by the "magnates." And when the scandals threatened Hollywood the Screen Writers Guild leaped to the defense.

So far as I know the association of motion picture producers has never

offered as much as one cent to spur the hunt for the person who shot Taylor, but when the question came up at a luncheon in the clubhouse of the Screen Writers Guild ten scenario writers guaranteed \$100 apiece on the spot. Maybe that merely signifies that the writers have all the money.

[The End]

NEXT ISSUE: William T. Sherman, Guest Editor:

Some Responses to a Number of Points Made in TAYLOROLOGY

In Defense of Mabel Normand

The Issue of Peavey's Credibility

The Credibility of Howard Fellows' Testimony

The Time Element Problem

Evidence for a Cover-Up

Summaries of the Cases against Charlotte Shelby and Carl Stockdale

NOTES:

[1]This is one of the earliest published rumors directed against Charlotte Shelby. The idea that Taylor was plying Minter with liquor and drugs is extremely doubtful.

[2]This was the first statement attributed to an official which supposedly asserted that Minter "was at Taylor's home a few hours before the murder." In view of that fact that other portions of this statement were later strongly denied by Keyes--he denied that he was anxious to talk with Mabel Normand, denied that his visit to Chicago had anything to do with the Taylor murder--and due to his subsequent and obviously true statement that "I have been grossly misquoted and many statements were put in my mouth that did not emanate from me", it seems unlikely that this statement about Minter was actually made by Keyes, and the entire statement may have been fabricated.

[3]The "Los Angeles real-estate operator" was Harold Fellows, who had been Taylor's assistant director at the time of his murder.

[4]The visit of Charlotte Shelby to Taylor's home, with a revolver hidden in her sleeve, actually took place nearly two years prior to the murder.

[5]Minter's statement to Keyes has never been made public, but in later interviews she strongly denied ever suspecting either her mother or Sands of having killed Taylor.

[6]This diary belonged to Chauncey Eaton, chauffeur for Charlotte Shelby, and had details of where he drove her on each day.

[7]Based upon the revelations appearing in the Hearst press in the days immediately following the theft of the briefcase, the following information may possibly have been contained in the briefcase:

- a. That Shelby supposedly knew of the murder before the police did.
- b. That Shelby visited Taylor's home once with a gun in her sleeve.
- c. That strands of blonde hair were found on Taylor's coat.

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.uno.edu/~drif/arbuckle/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>

For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 15 -- March 1994 Editor: Bruce Long *
* All reprinted material is in the public domain *
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What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

William T. Sherman has asked to temporarily take over the helm of TAYLOROLOGY in order to present his views on the Taylor case, so for this issue and the next, editorship will be his. Except for the endnotes (where Bruce Long

couldn't resist a few defensive comments), the rest of this issue is his doing. Take it away, Bill!

"Before we can make any accurate speculations of the causes and guilt of those involved we must know something of the community in which the victim lived and in which he died. It is my first contention that the murder itself and its consequent lack of solution had its roots deeply buried in the inner character of the community. I am convinced of this. I was there!"

-- King Vidor, private papers

I want to express my humble gratitude to Bruce Long for giving me this opportunity, using the forum of his TAYLOROLOGY, to express some ideas and views on the William Desmond Taylor murder case. I am an author working on a book on silent film comedienne Mabel Normand. Beginning in November 1990, a four part article I did on Mabel, entitled "Love and Courage: A Look at the Films and Career of Mabel Normand" appeared in CLASSIC IMAGES. As well, an updated filmography of her work, was published in July 1992 in that same magazine.

Those with a special interest in the Taylor case owe Bruce a great debt for the absolutely excellent and invaluable research he has done on the mystery, and there can be no gainsaying that he ranks with Vidor and Kirkpatrick as one of the most preeminent modern authorities on the case (Giroux, to my mind, has contributed little but more confusion). Although, as evinced by what follows, I am not in agreement with him on all the conclusions he has reached, I would be the first to admit that without the work he has done, I would have made little headway of my own in examining and chronicling the mystery. Not a few of the articles and clippings included here originated from him. To Bruce then, a very special and respectful thanks!

THOSE WITH COMMENTS OR INFORMATION ON ANY OF THE FOLLOWING MAY WRITE ME:

WILLIAM T. SHERMAN, 3014 N. W. 75TH ST., SEATTLE, WA 98117

In the course of this my guest "stint," I would like to address the following:

- 1). Some Responses to a Number of the Points Bruce has made in his TAYLOROLOGY.
- 2). In Defense of Mabel Normand
- 3). The Issue of Peavey's credibility
- 4). The Credibility of Howard Fellows' Testimony
- 5). The Time Element Problem
- 6). Evidence for a Cover-up
- 7). Summaries of the Cases against Charlotte Shelby and Carl Stockdale
- 8). A Look at the Character of Dist.-Atty. Thomas Lee Woolwine and his Administration

Note. Emphasis given in italics [changed to capitalization below] to portions of articles here is my own. Also, I would ask that readers withhold final judgment till they have been through all of the analysis or evidence presented. Finally, I do not, by any means, claim to have completely solved all of the mystery, but it is hoped that the effort made here will help towards that end.

1). SOME RESPONSES TO A NUMBER OF POINTS BRUCE HAS MADE IN HIS TAYLOROLOGY.

a) In Issue 11 of TAYLOROLOGY Bruce states that Charles Eyton did not, based on the inquest testimony of Detective Ziegler, arrive on the scene of the murder prior to the arrival of the police.

According to Detective Lieutenant Sanderson in his 1941 official report, Eyton and company were on the scene prior to the arrival of the police, see WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER, page 321. A possible explanation for Ziegler's statement was that he was lying as part of a quite understandable cover-up -- which cover-up will be looked at later in my analysis. [1]

b) While it is true that the contents of the letters exchanged between Mabel and Taylor were not (at least to my knowledge) ever published, it is not strictly true that there was never printed a specific indication as to the character of their contents.

* * * * *

February 11, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

"There is no secret about any phase of my relations with Mr. Taylor. My letters to him--I would gladly set them before the world if the authorities care to do that. I have nothing to conceal.

"I knew Mr. Taylor had letters of mine. Once several weeks before he was murdered I saw them in a drawer of his desk. I remonstrated with him. 'Why do you save my letters, Billy? I asked. There's nothing in them.' He merely smiled in answer.

"I have been charged with trying to recover those letters; with trying to conceal them. That is silly. If those letters are printed you will see that they are most of them casual; they express the jesting spirit that characterized our relations. We teased each other and made fun of each other a great deal. We did that continually on the night he was murdered, when I dropped in for a few minutes to see him."

As for the letters, she said, he would write her:

"Dear Mabel: I know you're an awfully busy woman and haven't much time to grant a poor duffer like me, but--how about dinner together next Wednesday and then the Orpheum?

"Yours always,
"Billy."

And on one occasion she said she answered:

"Dear Desperate Desmond:

"Sorry I cannot dine with you tomorrow. But I have a previous engagement with a Hindoo Prince. Some other time."

"Then," she said, "I would sign the letter with a little sketch of myself, or by drawing a `daffodil.' You know the daffodils, those funny little comic figures."

"Or he would write to me about books. I just want to show you some of the books he gave me."

* * * * *

2). IN DEFENSE OF MABEL NORMAND

The person who probably suffered the most from the Taylor murder in public eyes was Mabel Normand. More than any other connected with the case, she received most of the press' harsh criticism and crude sarcasm as a result of her involvement, and quite unfairly.

a). Did Mabel lie?

There can be little room for doubt that Mabel gave more interviews on her involvement in the case than anyone else. She gave numerous interviews over the years till her death in 1930, recounting the events which took place in the afternoon and early evening of February 1, 1922, and in all of them there is very little or no deviation from the story she gives. If she ever

had been not telling the truth, this would have been quite a feat, especially when we take into account the many illnesses and traumas she was subject to.

In Issue 6 of TAYLOROLOGY Bruce gives his speculated interpretation of the conversation that took place between Mabel and Taylor the night of the murder. Well, with all due respect to Bruce, his characterization is preposterous and without justifiable foundation. The only persons who could possibly speak to what was said were Mabel, Taylor and possibly Peavey. For my part, I see no reason to doubt Mabel's own version given her consistency.

There is, not surprisingly, some honest dispute as to the nature and extent of Mabel's use of profanity and drugs. While I think few scholars would out and out deny the incidences of either, there are some who have jumped to conclusions as to the character and extent of both her use of profanity and drugs without any hard evidence to substantiate such conclusions. [2]

For example, Bruce is quick to conclude that the many reported cases of Mabel's being ill were covered-up instances of problems she was having with drugs, and not real, natural illnesses at all. Again, there is no hard evidence to warrant such an assumption. [3] Some have said she did not die of tuberculosis, but instead died of drug addiction. If the illnesses Mabel was frequently reported as suffering from were genuine, they could easily be explained as early symptoms of the tuberculosis. Where did Mabel contract this illness? While we can never know with certainty, it is interesting to note a little story Samuel Goldwyn tells in his 1923 autobiography and look at Hollywood entitled BEHIND THE SCREEN:

"Those interested in the personality of Mabel Normand can receive no more illuminating introduction to her than the incident just sketched. There are a hundred tales of this characteristic response to any human appeal clustering about the name of Mabel Normand. One which came directly under my observation relates to a poor girl with a dependent family. The girl was stricken with tuberculosis and, although Mabel did not know her, she became interested in her condition through a friend of hers. Immediately she went to

see her, and when she left she pressed something into the sick girl's hand. It was only after she had gone that the other realized what her caller had left. It was a check for a thousand dollars.

"Nor does Mabel wait for the large demand upon her sympathy. Gifts from her come unprovoked as manna. She is likely to go out and buy a hundred dollar beaded bag for a stenographer in the organization, and just as likely to invest a corresponding amount in remembering somebody whom she has met once and happened to like."

Mabel was a far more talented, prominent and influential movie star at the time of the murder than some have led us to believe. Anita Garvin, now 87, who appeared with Mabel in "Raggedy Rose" told me that, at her height, Mabel was as popular in fans' love and admiration as Pickford. In terms of her relations to the press she was like someone like Marlon Brando in that she did not feel a great need to seek publicity, yet it came to her. No doubt some were jealous of this fact. She championed the under privileged, for in practically all her feature films she plays working girls. Most of all, however, due to her free spirited, uninhibited, character, she represented a threat to established money and established society. She inspired envy and resentment, both for her charm and looks, and for the incredible amount of money she made as a film star. It is little wonder then, the extremely negative myths and story telling that grew up around her after her connection with the Taylor case. The reasons for this become even more clear when we contemplate the possibility of a cover-up.

3) THE ISSUE OF PEAVEY'S CREDIBILITY

In Issue 6 of TAYLOROLOGY, Bruce examines Peavey's theory behind the murder. It is my confirmed contention that Peavey was an unabashed liar, and accomplice, willingly or no, in the cover-up of the murder. Perhaps he was

even in on the murder himself. [4] To prove these claims, let's look at some of the statements Peavey made in interviews:

a) In his earliest accounts of finding Taylor's body on the morning of February 2, Peavey states that he found his dead employer lying in a pool of blood. Interestingly enough, this crucial detail he gives in his first interviews, which discredits the notion that when Taylor was found it was thought he died of natural causes, is omitted entirely from all the later interviews he gave.

* * * * *

February 2, 1922
R. W. Borough
LOS ANGELES RECORD

NEGRO VALET SOBS STORY OF TRAGEDY

"`Good night, Henry, good night,' he said to me when I left him yesterday," said Henry Peavey, Taylor's colored valet, between sobs as he told of the tragedy that ended the life of his beloved employer last night.

"`Good night, Mr. Taylor," I said to him, and that's the last I saw of him until I opened the door this morning and found his dead body, his feet stretching toward me on the floor."

The negro broke into soft sobs and then declared passionately: "I wish I could get the man that did it. I'd go to jail for the rest of my life if I could get him."

As Peavey talked, he was taking some white cloths clotted with blood from a wire paper basket and placing them in the court incinerator.

"His blood," the negro said, pathetically. "We just used the cloths to clean up the room."

"Mr. Taylor was the most wonderful man I ever worked for and I don't see how anybody would want to kill him. I have been with him six months."

Peavey said that he came to Taylor's apartment early today, intending to

go through the usual round of his duties.

"I was going to fix his bath water for him," said the valet, "and then give him his dose of medicine. After that I was going to fix his breakfast--a couple of boiled eggs, some toast and a glass of orange juice.

"WHEN I OPENED THE DOOR I SAW HIM LYING THERE STRETCHED OUT ON THE FLOOR, HIS FEET TOWARD ME AND THE FLOOR ALL BLOODY.

"I turned and screamed and the landlord came rushing in.'

Peavey said he lived at 127 1/2 Third Street.

"I have not been staying with Taylor during the night, but have been sleeping in my room."

Peavey's theory was that somebody slipped into the open door of Taylor's apartment when Taylor took Mabel Normand to her car late last night, and shot him from ambush inside the room.

* * * * *

February 3, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

VALET TELLS OF FINDING BODY

There were tears on the cheek of Henry Peavey, colored, who for six months had been employed as William Desmond Taylor's valet, as he told the story yesterday of how he discovered the murdered man's body upon entering the apartment yesterday morning.

The night before, when Peavey left to go to his own home, Taylor called a cheery, "Good night, Henry."

"I can hear his voice yet," said this humble mourner. "It was the kind of strong, friendly voice that made a man feel good." And then he burst out, "I'd be willing to go to jail for the rest of my life if I could get the man that did it."

The valet was at his last task for the master; he was wiping up the blood from the floor, but his sobs shook him at times so that he could not proceed.

"I've worked for a lot of men," he went on, "but Mr. Taylor was the most

wonderful of all of them. I came here this morning intending to fix his bath and get his breakfast, which I always does. And before the bath I'd bring him a dose of medicine. It was always just the same--for breakfast two soft-boiled eggs, toast and a glass of orange juice.

"And having it in my mind to make everything just as nice as I could, knowing he would be pleased and say a kind word, I opened the door.

"AND THEN I FOUND HIM STRETCHED OUT ON THE FLOOR, WHICH WAS ALL BLOODY AND HIS FEET TOWARD THE DOOR.

"And then I backed to the door, pretty near overcome with horror, and yelled for the landlord. The way I figure it is that somebody slipped in last night when Mr. Taylor took Miss Normand to the car and shot him from hiding. But how could any one kill such a man as he was?"

Peavey lives at 127 1/2 East Third street. His habit was to reach the Taylor apartment before breakfast and leave after dinner.

* * * * *

b) Peavey later clearly implied, if not stated, that he believed Mabel committed the murder. If he was lying about this what might have been his motives?

1) It was Mabel, who through giving her version of her visit with Taylor, disclosed to the public Peavey's charge for "vagrancy" in Westlake Park.

2) Mabel, in describing her visit, refers to Peavey's silly outfit in a way he might not have found particularly flattering.

3) Peavey was involved, voluntarily or no, in a cover-up

* * * * *

"I then directed William, my chauffeur, to drive to Mr. Taylor's home. I arrived, went up on the porch, and the door was opened by Mr. Taylor's valet, Henry Peavey. I saw Taylor inside talking on the phone, and when Henry asked me to step in, I refrained because I didn't want to eavesdrop on his conversation.

"Then Henry went inside and told Mr. Taylor I was there. At once he said good-by, hung up the phone and came forward to greet me."

"I know why you're here," he said. "You haven't come to see me at all; you've just come after that book!"

"The book was 'Rosmundy,' by Ethel M. Dell. It was not a copy of one of Freud's works as has been said. I read Freud and Nietzsche long before I met Mr. Taylor.

"For some time Mr. Taylor and I spoofed each other in our usual way, while Henry worked about the back part of the house. I looked about and said, 'This place has changed since I saw it last. I see you have both a piano and Victrola now. My, you're getting all together too rich.'

"Then we discussed books. We discussed 'Three Soldiers,' a book that Chicago newspaper man, John Dos Passos. He had read it only recently and was much interested. And several other new books came into the discussion.

"When Henry Peavey entered I stared at him in amusement. I stared at his curious attire. He wore green golf stockings, yellow knickers and a dark coat. He left by the front door, smiling broadly and saying good night to me and Mr. Taylor. The way he said it--he's a funny colored boy with lots of mannerisms--made me smile.

"When Henry had gone I said, 'Why don't you get him a set of golf sticks? Then he'd be all set up.'

"Mr. Taylor's face grew serious then and he discussed Henry at some length, telling me how Henry had been arrested a short time before and how he had gone down to see the judge about the vagrancy charge. And how he had put up a bond of \$200 to secure Henry's release.

* * * * *

c) What was Mabel's attitude toward Peavey?

* * * * *

February 7, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

"If Peavey, his colored servant, says that I had asked him about any girls that Mr. Taylor had ever been interested in, it is a venomous fabrication. Never in my life have I spoken to this man directly, and never have I talked to him in any way except in the presence of others, including Mr. Taylor. And as for the subject of girls--the question never entered my mind." [5]

* * * * *

d) Peavey claimed that Mabel once came over to Taylor's bungalow and in a jealous fit of rage ripped up her pictures he possessed of her in his presence. [6] Is it possible that Peavey fabricated this incident based on something that takes place in Mabel's film "Molly-O"? Note the following excerpt from the synopsis to that film.

* * * * *

from synopsis to "Molly'O"

Mack Sennett papers

Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

"...At this Molly'O becomes enraged, denouncing the heavy woman and all society, and storms from the house. The hero is, perhaps, just coming up the steps to pay a call and is surprised to meet Molly'O. He speaks to her pleasantly, but she, being so angry, merely sees him as one of the society clique. She denounces him and walks away, much to his surprise.

It may be a good touch to show the effect of this insult on Molly'O by having her, on reaching home, take the hero's picture and the article about him and destroy them, getting over her disappointment in the treatment of the

class of people she had thought were respectable."

* * * * *

e) Peavey and George Arto's testimony

In mid February 1922, George Arto, brother in law of King Vidor, came forward with a quite interesting story which was presented to the public as follows: Note how Peavey's response changes over time.

* * * * *

February 12, 1922

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Peavey Questioned

Henry Peavey, colored valet for Mr. Taylor. was summarily called to Dist.-Atty. Woolwine's office late yesterday following the discovery of new and important information regarding the murder. Peavey had previously been questioned at considerable length in Mr. Woolwine's office by Chief Deputy Doran.

The valet arrived at Mr. Woolwine's office shortly after 3 p.m. yesterday and was closeted for a considerable time with the District Attorney, Mr. Doran and officers of the police department and of the Sheriff's force.

The instructions for the officers to bring Peavey to the office where the investigation into the murder mystery has been centralized came shortly after a new witness had been in long conference with the officials.

This witness whose name was said by Undersheriff Biscailus and Deputy Sheriff Nolan to be Henry Britt, but which was signed by the young man as Edward F. Arto, was taken to Mr. Woolwine's office from Sheriff Traeger's headquarters. He refused to give his name to newspaper men.

Mr. Arto, as he signed himself. said he over heard a conversation either the night of the murder or the night before between Peavey and another man

regarding Mr. Taylor's affairs. The nature of the conversation aside from that Mr. Arto declined to divulge, but he believed the information of value to the investigators.

Mr. Arto was going to the home of some relatives near the Taylor apartments on South Alvarado street about 7:10 p.m. when he heard the two men talking. He gave a rather vague description of the strange man but said he was an American apparently, wore a cap and aroused Mr. Arto's suspicion. PEAVEY STRENUOUSLY DENIED THAT HE HELD ANY SUCH CONVERSATION.

* * * * *

February 20, 1922

LOS ANGELES RECORD

A search was being conducted Monday for the third man, who, according to the statement of George F. Arto, was talking with Mabel Normand's chauffeur and William Desmond Taylor's valet outside the Taylor bungalow the night of the murder.

William Davis, chauffeur, insists there was no third man. Arto declares just as strongly that there was. HENRY PEAVEY, THE NEGRO VALET, SAYS HE IS NOT SURE THAT A MAN MIGHT HAVE STOPPED WHILE HE WAS TALKING TO DAVIS TO ASK FOR A MATCH OR SOMETHING OF THAT SORT. Arto describes the third man as a rough looking customer. The sheriff's office attaches great importance to this point and it is believed that the mystery would be on the way to solution if this third man could be found and identified.

* * * * *

February 20, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

William Davis, the chauffeur of Mabel Normand is to be questioned again. He has been three times upon the grill, and each time has corroborated with unchanging relation of minute circumstances, the story told by Miss Normand of her visit to Taylor on the evening of his murder. Woolwine, however, is not yet satisfied concerning the presumed error of George F. Arto, who continues emphatically to declare that, passing the premises, he saw Henry Peavey, the colored valet, talking to a stranger in a plaid cap and muffler

in front of the house, while Davis was seated in Miss Normand's car, and the actress was inside the bungalow with Taylor. DAVIS AND PEAHEY BOTH DECLARE ARTO TO BE MISTAKEN. ARTO, WITH EQUAL VEHEMENCE, DECLARES HE IS NOT.

Arto, a motion picture mechanic and brother of Florence Vidor, one of the best known of screen actresses, reiterated today with a good deal of emphasis the declaration of the scene as he observed it.

"There were three men," he said. "One was a chauffeur who was sitting in the car at the wheel. His cap was down over his face, and I could not make out his features.

"On the sidewalk, some distance from the car and engaged in conversation were two men--Peavey, whom I recognized, having seen him a number of times, and the other a white man.

"This man wore a cap and was rather rough looking.

"As I passed I heard the name "Taylor" spoken two or three times.

"In my original statement I was uncertain as to whether this occurred on the night of the murder or the preceding one. However, there was a circumstance which enabled me to check up on this. I was on my way to the home of a young woman, (I) was calling on her.

"On comparing notes with her I established the date Feb. 1.

"Although it is doubtful whether I could identify this man should I see him again, there can be no question that I saw him."

It is a possibility, the police believe, that Davis may not have seen this man. BUT, ON THE STRENGTH OF ARTO'S MOST POSITIVE ASSERTION, THEY CANNOT ACCOUNT FOR PEAHEY'S FAILURE TO REMEMBER HIM.

Peavey has been cross-examined some five or six times, the last by the District Attorney, but in none of the latter statements was there any substantial variations from the original. Although he was instructed not to leave town or change his residence without notifying the District Attorney, the authorities have taken it for granted that he has told all he knows.

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4) THE CREDIBILITY OF HOWARD FELLOWS' TESTIMONY

It has been taken for granted by most scholars that the testimony of Taylor's chauffeur, Howard Fellows, brother of Lasky employee Harry Fellows, is not to be doubted. Fellows' testimony is critical because it supposedly places almost exactly when the murder was to have taken place. Is it possible, however, that Fellows, as part of a cover-up, was lying?

Here is Fellows' testimony:

* * * * *

February 8, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Declaring that he called William D. Taylor at 7:55 o'clock Wednesday night and receiving no answer, went to the apartment of the film director. arriving there at 8:15 o'clock, rang the doorbell and still met with no response, Howard Fellows, chauffeur for the murdered director, last night definitely fixed the time within which the crime must have been committed and added facts regarded as of first magnitude importance in their bearing upon the crime.

Strangely enough, this young man, who had been Taylor's driver for nearly six months, had not been questioned at length until yesterday, when an Examiner representative called on him at his home, 1622 Shatto place.

He is brother of Harry Fellows, who was Taylor's assistant director.

Yesterday Detective Sergeant Tom Zeigler took Howard to the Taylor home, 404-B South Alvarado street. He was partially identified by a resident of the neighborhood as the person he had seen seated in a car on the night of the murder near the scene of the crime and about the time it was committed.

Fellows denied this and convinced Zeigler that the man was mistaken.

One of Fellows' most interesting statements, other than that relating to his movements and observations on the night of the assassination, had to do with an alleged quarrel between Taylor and Mabel Normand.

"I was driving Mr. Taylor and Miss Normand from the Ambassador Hotel, where they had attended a New Year's Eve party, to her home," said Fellows.

"On the way they had a quarrel. I don't know what it was about, but both were very much excited.

"Mr. Taylor took Miss Normand home and then returned to his apartment. Upon arriving there he broke down and wept.

"On the following morning he did up some jewelry in a package and took it to Miss Normand at her home."

Henry Peavey, Taylor's colored valet, confirms this.

"Mr. Taylor and Miss Normand were very affectionate," continued Fellows. Questioned independently, Peavey said Taylor often caressed her.

As to these matters Fellows spoke casually, but when he entered upon the events of the night of February 1, his narrative became astounding both as to its content, and because he never told it before.

"I left the house (Mr. Taylor's) about 4:30 Wednesday afternoon," Fellows began.

"Mr. Taylor told me he might be going out in the evening and instructed me to be sure to telephone by 7:30. I went to the home of a young lady friend and was there until 7:55. I recall the time accurately because I had it on my mind to call Mr. Taylor and ask him if he would need the car.

"I called him two or three times before that hour, but received no reply. I left the house of my girl friend at five minutes to eight and drove directly to Mr. Taylor's.

"I reached there about quarter past eight.

"There was a light in the living room. I was surprised that Mr. Taylor should be home and not have answered the telephone.

"I rang the doorbell. Silence. I rang again. Still, no response. I must have rung three or four times. Then I concluded: 'Well, he has some one there and doesn't want to answer.

"So I put up the car, I was around back of the house, and it is peculiar that persons in the neighborhood should have heard me walking and not have heard me put up the car. I made a good deal of noise doing this, as the

garage is difficult to get into, and I guess I must have backed the car up four or five times.

"I am satisfied that I am the man Mrs. Douglas MacLean saw standing on the porch and leaving the house, I wore a cap and a raincoat.

"I noticed no cars in the immediate vicinity and saw no one who aroused my suspicions.

"Naturally, I am convinced that both when I phoned and when I rang the doorbell, Mr. Taylor was lying there on the floor murdered."

Taking the testimony of Fellows and Miss Normand together, it is now possible to fix the time of the murder within fifteen minutes.

Miss Normand said she left Taylor between 7:30 and 7:45 o'clock.

Fellows called at 7:55.

The murder was committed between Miss Normand's leave taking and Fellows' phoning.

Hence, for the first time, the police have a picture of the murder as it relates to the time when and in which it was committed.

Before Fellows' statement became available there was no conclusive evidence as to the time the bullet of the assassin struck the film director down. testimony as to the shot being heard was so vague as to be unconvincing. It could not be said with finality that the murder did not occur at midnight or at any hour of the night.

The acts of the drama leading to the murder must have been brief. It would appear, indeed, that there were no preliminaries, that the intruder, concealed in the room, stepped out and fired the shot.

It is therefore deduced that it was a premeditated crime and not one precipitated by a quarrel or any sort of scene more than of momentary duration.

One group of police investigators and most of the deputy sheriffs working on the case are now convinced that the visit of Mabel Normand was the immediate antecedent occasion for the crime.

This theory naturally takes for granted that Miss Normand had not the slightest intimation that her dear friend was to be shot to death, but

officers cannot help but believe that the murderer found the way for his crime paved in some way by the visit of Miss Normand.

* * * * *

Some Questions:

a) Fellows says that Taylor broke down and cried when he brought him home from the Ambassador Hotel outing with Mabel. Why would Taylor, a man known for his emotional reserve, invite his chauffeur inside the house and permit him (the chauffeur) to see him break down and cry?

b) Why did it take almost a week (February 7-8) for Howard Fellows' testimony to come forth? Surely, he must have been aware of its weighty significance? Why did he not contact the police earlier and why hadn't the police contacted him, given his close personal business relationship to the slain director? [7]

c) Did no one hear Fellow's starting his car because he wasn't there in the first place?

d) Why did Fellows insist it was he whom Faith MacLean saw? Fellows merely knocked on the door, whereas Faith MacLean said she saw a man leaving the bungalow and closing the door behind him.

5) THE TIME ELEMENT PROBLEM

It has generally been assumed that Taylor's murder took place within the last quarter hour prior to 8 o'clock, but could this be wrong? The final conclusion that the murder took place within this time frame rests entirely on Fellows testimony

a) To bring into question this assumption, let's return to the testimony of George Arto.

* * * * *

February 22, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

An amplified statement secured yesterday by The Examiner from George F. Arto, motion picture writer, gives new facts which tend to change the whole theory of the crime as to its time element.

Arto, it will be recalled, passed front of the Taylor house on the night of the murder and, as he states, saw Peavey standing on the sidewalk talking to a man of swarthy complexion--a rough looking character.

This was at approximately 7 o'clock.

HIS MEMORY REFRESHED BY CIRCUMSTANCES TO WHICH HIS ATTENTION HAD BEEN CALLED SINCE GIVING HIS FIRST STATEMENT, HE REMEMBERED YESTERDAY THAT HE RETURNED TO THE BUNGALOW COURT AT 7:45 O'CLOCK.

HE IS POSITIVE OF THIS, HE SAID, AS HE PHONED A YOUNG WOMAN WHO LIVES NEAR THE TAYLOR BUNGALOW, ON WHOM HE WAS CALLING. HE TOLD HER IN THIS CONVERSATION THAT HE WOULD BE OVER IN FIVE MINUTES AND, LOOKING AT HIS WATCH, HE FOUND THE TIME TO BE 7:40.

HE IMMEDIATELY STARTED TO WALK FROM HIS HOME AT 220 SOUTH BONNIE BRAE STREET. HE REACHED A POINT IN FRONT OF TAYLOR'S HOUSE WITHIN FIVE MINUTES.

"AT THAT TIME," HE SAID, "I SAW NO ONE AROUND. MISS NORMAND'S CAR HAD GONE, AND PEAHEY WAS NOT IN SIGHT."

HE WENT TO THE HOUSE OF THE YOUNG WOMAN, AND SAT IN THE FRONT ROOM NEXT TO THE WINDOW UNTIL ABOUT TEN MINUTES AFTER EIGHT.

"DURING THAT TIME," HE DECLARED, "I HEARD NO SHOT AND AM POSITIVE THAT I WOULD HAVE HEARD A SHOT BEEN FIRED."

Arto is familiar with firearms, having tested guns for the Savage Arms Company and would be able, he asserts, to distinguish a pistol shot from the backfire of automobiles.

As close to the scene of the crime as was either Mrs. MacLean or her maid, Christina Jewett, and in a better position to hear and observe, Arto nevertheless was not attracted by any unusual noises.

Hence, it is now believed possible that the murder may have been committed either before or after the time fixed by Mrs. MacLean. And District Attorney Woolwine yesterday admitted the likelihood that the man seen by Mrs. MacLean leaving Taylor's front door was Howard Fellows, the film director's chauffeur.

* * * * *

b) In the MacLean's earliest version of their sitting down to dinner and hearing the shot, they state that the time was 9 O'CLOCK. Why this major discrepancy with later versions? [8]

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February 2, 1922

LONG BEACH DAILY TELEGRAM

Shot down while writing at a desk by a mysterious assassin, William Desmond Taylor, well known motion picture producer and director, was found dead today in his bungalow in the Westlake District. Death was caused by a bullet wound in the back, just below the left shoulder, according to police.

Taylor, who was 50 years old and wealthy, apparently was killed between 9 and 10 o'clock last night. The body was found today by a colored servant when he reported for duty at the house.

Police detectives who first reached the scene reported that death was from natural causes and it was not until nearly an hour later when an undertaker was removing the body that the bullet wound was found.

Additional officers immediately were dispatched to the house and a comprehensive investigation was begun. The bullet wound caused an internal hemorrhage and Taylor accidentally died a few minutes after being attacked.

DETECTIVES QUESTIONED NEIGHBORS, WHO STATED THEY HEARD WHAT APPARENTLY WAS THE REPORT OF THE REVOLVER SHORTLY AFTER 9 P.M. BUT AT THAT TIME BELIEVED IT WAS CAUSED BY AN AUTOMOBILE.

The police immediately began search for Edward F. Sands, former

secretary of Taylor. Robbery was not the motive for the murder it was announced, as officers found \$73 in the pocket of the slain man, as well as a large amount of jewelry in the house.

Taylor's revolver was found in a drawer of the dresser in his bedroom on the second floor of the pretentious house. It had not been discharged and none of his personal effects had been disturbed.

The officers reported they are confident that revenge was the motive of the mysterious slayer.

The police records state that when Taylor went to England a year ago on a business and pleasure trip he left Sands, then his secretary, in charge of his personal affairs and when he returned he reported to Detective Sergeants Herman Cline and E.R. Cato that Sands had robbed him of money, jewelry, clothing and a valuable automobile.

A felony warrant was issued for Sands and the police say he never was found.

A second robbery at the Taylor residence was attributed to Sands by the police.

Among the witnesses questioned by the police during the morning were Mabel Normand, Edna Purviance and Douglas MacLean, prominent film stars.

MISS NORMAND ADMITTED HAVING VISITED TAYLOR'S BUNGALOW IN THE EARLY EVENING YESTERDAY TO DISCUSS A NEW PRODUCTION AND THAT HE HAD ESCORTED HER TO HER AUTOMOBILE AT THE CURB SHORTLY BEFORE 9 P.M. Taylor was to telephone to her later in the evening. Miss Normand said he did not do so.

Miss Purviance, who lives in a house adjoining Taylor's bungalow, returned home about midnight and saw a light burning in Taylor's study.

MACLEAN AND HIS WIFE, WHO LIVE IN THE SAME DISTRICT, STATED THEY HEARD THE SHOT FIRED AFTER 9 O'CLOCK. THEY THOUGHT AT THE TIME IT MIGHT BE AN AUTOMOBILE EXHAUST. THEY DESCRIBED A STRANGE MAN WHOM THEY SAW IN THE STREET.

Miss Normand told detectives that while she was talking with Taylor early last evening concerning a new picture production the robberies of the Taylor home were mentioned.

"He told me he feared Sands and that he had a premonition of something

wrong," Miss Normand was quoted as telling officers.

* * * * *

February 2, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXPRESS

...The police are not, however, basing their investigation now upon the theory that the thief was the slayer. Instead, they at present list it as a "murder mystery."

THE SLAYER EVIDENTLY COMMITTED THE CRIME ABOUT NEAR 9 O'CLOCK LAST NIGHT. IT WAS AT THAT TIME THAT DOUGLAS MACLEAN, MOTION PICTURE ACTOR, AND HIS WIFE, WHO LIVED NEXT DOOR, SAY THEY HEARD THE SOUND OF THE PISTOL SHOT.

Police also believe that the slaying occurred at that time because of the opinion expressed by the deputy coroner that the man had been dead for more than ten hours when the body was found.

The last person who saw Taylor alive, with the exception of the assassin, was Miss Mabel Normand, film star. She visited him at his home last night. She arrived at the home shortly before 7 o'clock, she said. Her statement to Detectives Winn and Murphy follows:

"I had my chauffeur drive out to Mr. Taylor's home last evening, as we had a number of business matters to discuss. I should judge that I arrived there a little before 7 o'clock. It was while I was there that we again discussed the case of a man who had been in Mr. Taylor's employ and who stole from him.

"I asked Mr. Taylor what he intended doing with the man if he was captured--and he said that he would see that the man was prosecuted. We then discussed a certain scenario that I had written and a scenario that a friend of mine had written.

"While we were talking, William Peavey, Mr. Taylor's butler, was moving about in the two rooms. It was then, also, that Mr. Taylor told me that William was in some little trouble. He said that his servant had been arrested on a charge of vagrancy and that he had been forced to go down to the police station and deposit \$200 bail for him.

"He said that he intended appearing in police court at a o'clock [sic]

this afternoon and said he would do what he could to aid his servant if he was convinced that the man was not guilty. But he said that if Peavey had been guilty of doing any wrong that he would be forced to discharge him.

"After we had discussed a few other trifling matters Mr. Taylor asked me if I would remain and have dinner with him. I excused myself and told him that I must hurry to my home. He then asked me if he might visit me later that night and I told him I should be glad if he would come over to my home. He promised to call me on the telephone some time about 9 o'clock.

"Mr. Taylor then accompanied me from his house to my automobile. My chauffeur, William Davis, was seated in the machine and heard Mr. Taylor bid me good-night. Mr. Taylor and I were talking when I saw Peavey leave the house. He spoke to all of us and bid us good-night. We talked for a few minutes longer and Mr. Taylor turned and walked up toward his house and my machine moved away. I have not seen him since."

Davis, who lives at 1920 Las Palmas avenue, when questioned by the officers said the same story as did Miss Normand, and said that when they left there was no one moving about the yard that surrounds the house in which the tragedy occurred.

It is evident, the detectives believe that Taylor after he entered the house sat down at once in front of his desk and that the assassin entered a few minutes later.

The papers on the desk were mussed up and there were a large number of cancelled checks lying upon the desk. Miss Normand, in her statement to the police stated that the desk was in the same condition when she left the house, about 8 or 8:30 o'clock last night.

It was at midnight that Miss Edna Purviance, who resides in the house adjoining Mr. Taylor's to the west, returned home. At that time, she said, she noticed that the lights were burning in Mr. Taylor's house.

She went to the door, she said, and rang the bell and knocked upon the door. When she failed to secure a response she returned to her own home, believing Mr. Taylor probably had left the house after forgetting to turn off the electric light switch.

At the time she was knocking upon the door the body of her friend was lying just behind the door and within a few feet of her.

As detectives reconstruct the murder scene, they believe that the slayer opened the door a few minutes after Miss Normand had left, at the time Taylor was seated on a chair in front of the desk checking over the canceled checks.

As Taylor half rose from his chair the slayer stepped into the room, and with pistol carefully aimed, pulled the trigger. The bullet entered the left breast just below the shoulder and ranged downward through the heart.

Taylor fell over backward mortally wounded and probably died within a few seconds after he had been shot. But one shot was fired. The person who wielded the gun was evidently experienced in the handling of firearms and an excellent marksman. From the appearance of the wound it was evidently a .32 caliber pistol.

The police believe that this was the caliber of the pistol because it made so little noise that the slayer was able to leave the house without attracting significant attention.

When Peavey arrived and opened the house this morning all of the electric lights were burning just as they had been when Miss Purviance knocked at the door.

Robbery was clearly not the motive of the crime. A purse containing \$78 and a very valuable watch were found in the clothing on the body. There was no indication that any search had been made of the house for valuables and nothing was found to be missing when a careful check of the effects were made by Charles Eyton, manager of the Lasky studios and a close friend of the dead man.

Charles Maigne, a friend of the dead man, told officers that he was positive that Taylor believed that sometime an enemy might return and do him harm.

Douglas MacLean and his wife were having their supper in their home that also adjoins Taylor's house, but to the east, when they heard the sound of a shot. They place the time at about 9:30 or 9 o'clock in the statement they made to Detective Sergeants Wallis and Ziegler.

Mrs. MacLean, however, told the officers that she noticed a man WALKING RAPIDLY DOWN THE WALK towards Taylor's home last evening shortly after Miss Normand left. She gave the following description of the man to officers: Height about 5 feet 8 or 9 inches, weight about 165 pounds. He had a muffler about his neck and was at the time wearing a plaid cap pulled over his eyes. She did not notice the clothing he was wearing and was unable to furnish the police with a better description because she says, she was unable to see distinctly at that hour of the night.

"I had, of course, no reason to be suspicious of that man at that time," said Mrs. MacLean, when discussing the case with the two detective sergeants. "But now I am convinced that he was the slayer. It was after I had seen him that my husband and I sat down to dinner. THAT WAS ABOUT 8:30 OR 9 O'CLOCK, I GUESS.

"We had just started our dinner when we heard a pistol shot. We did not investigate because we heard nothing further after that to arouse our suspicions and we thought that possibly the sound we heard then was that of an automobile backfiring in the street. Now, of course, we know that it was the shot that ended the life of Mr. Taylor."

* * * * *

Some Questions:

1) If Taylor was killed between 8:30 and 9, as given by the MacLean's original story, how did the killer get inside and wait to shoot him? Was he, based on this theory, killed and then left neatly in place, with his coat buttoned, the way he was found? Did someone gain entrance because they knew him?

2) Why is it stated that Mabel said he escorted her to her car shortly before 9 o'clock?

Is this what she actually said in her very first interviews or was this falsely injected into reports?

3) Why are there differences in the MacLean's story, the first and later ones given? The first story says she saw a strange man walking "toward" the house (not leaving it).

4) Given Arto's testimony, was William Davis, Mabel's chauffeur, somehow in cahoots with an alleged cover-up conspiracy, perhaps even a conspiracy to commit the murder itself? It is interesting, if not in itself significant, to note that Davis was discharged from Mabel's employ not long after the murder.

5) Mabel is said to have referred to Peavey in the interview contained in the above article as "William." How could she possibly have made this mistake knowing full well that Peavey's first name was "Henry?" Was this interview with her concocted out of whole cloth or is it in fact genuine? Are the errors contained in the above piece a product of the reporter's sloppiness, or was he simply getting his report from someone else, i.e. hearsay? If the interview or interviews were purposely distorted or fabricated how might this be explained? Who might have gained by this?

6) EVIDENCE FOR A COVER-UP

The following are a number of brief points which suggest that there was a deliberate cover-up of Taylor's murder on the part of official authorities. Is it perhaps even possible that some official authorities actually participated in some way with the killing?

Note. Neither this or subsequent listings presumes to be exhaustive.

* In Peavey's interviews the first days after the murder (presented earlier here) he states that he found Taylor lying in a pool of blood. The bungalow

court owner Jessurums made a similar statement. If so, what person in their right mind would automatically leap to the assumption that Taylor died of natural causes, as is reported to have happened when he was first found?

- * Woolwine's connections with Shelby prior to murder
- * Jim Smith, Woolwine investigator, in Shelby's apt/home night of murder (see Marjorie Berger's testimony).
- * Missing key evidence in police files, particularly Shelby's Grand Jury testimony which closed investigation.
- * Investigators let go who picked up on good leads
- * Neither Stockdale nor Kirkwood was brought in for testimony
- * Shelby wasn't brought in for questioning, despite Berger's testimony about her phone call the morning of Feb. 2, 1922
- * Woolwine in 1915 accused of bribery, Asa Keyes convicted for same in 1930
- * Woolwine's well known and widely reported bungling of the investigation.
- * Focus on drug dealers instead as the "real" problem facing the city. The absurdity of many of these drug dealer stories, such as that of Harry "the Chink" Field, speak for themselves. Obviously much of these testimonies were got out of criminals who wanted to get a deal on their sentence, and corrupt police officials, such as Keyes, took advantage of this.
- * The host of innumerable and ludicrous leads and "confessions"
- * Buron Fitts makes statement, 1930, that all evidence on the case would be saved for the record, while this is far from what actually has happened.
- * Mabel left in lurch, focus distracted to her, even though most investigators knew she was innocent.
- * Burton Fitts commits suicide with .38 revolver very similar to one used in murder. Was his message perhaps, "This is where the department went wrong?"

POSSIBLE MOTIVES FOR COVER-UP:

1. Protect Shelby (and possibly Mabel as well, assuming Stockdale's involvement)
2. Bribery by Shelby.

3. Antipathy to nonconformist, womanizing, anti-censorship radical Taylor.
4. Shelby close friends with Woolwine.
5. D.A.'s thought that it was better to let Shelby go free, then to admit their mistake/corruption; or exonerate Mabel (she was after all an alleged drug user so she must be guilty of something anyway, right?).
6. Get rid of Mabel
7. Perhaps there was actual complicity by some of the police in Taylor's murder. Given the bizarre nature of the Taylor case, an explanation like this may not be as far fetched as it might at first seem. [9]

The following is a rather interesting article with regard to this possible theory:

* * * * *

February 4, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Woman Tells Of Seeing Man Acting Suspiciously

An excellent example of habitual observation was brought to light yesterday when Mrs. Ida Garrow, a modiste living at the Rose of Sharon Apartments, told Examiner investigators that on Wednesday night as she was walking down Ocean View avenue, at the intersection of Alvarado street, she noticed a man acting in a very peculiar manner.

"It was about EIGHT THIRTY, OR POSSIBLY TWENTY MINUTES OF NINE," said Mrs. Garrow yesterday, "Wednesday evening I was hurrying to my club which meets at the corner of Grand View and Ocean View avenue. I was late for a class that was studying Hebrew which I did not want to miss, but as I have trained my observational faculties in the study of astrology. It is without voluntary effort that I perceive whatever comes within the range of vision.

"As I came to Alvarado street, I saw a tall, slender, smooth shaven policeman, whose face I would instinctively recognize if I were to see him again, walking toward Ocean View avenue. Walking with him was another man, to whom I did not pay particular attention, because my curiosity was aroused by

the peculiar actions of a man who was coming toward me a few feet in front of the policeman. Although the policeman was not paying the slightest attention to this man, the man was glancing back apprehensively over his shoulder, and at times looking in away from the street which would be directly in toward the court where the body of Mr. Taylor was found.

"As the policeman got closer to this man, the man crossed the street, and I noticed as he crossed that he was short and stout and wore a long overcoat, but there was the shadow of a building falling at such an angle that I could not determine whether he wore a cap or a hat."

Who was the policeman walking down Alvarado street at 8:30 or 8:45, and what did he see? This slight clue given by a careful observer may lead to very important developments in the mysterious murder whose points are now baffling the keenest detectives of the city.

7) SUMMARY OF THE CASES AGAINST CHARLOTTE SHELBY AND CARL STOCKDALE

It is my belief that Shelby and or Carl Stockdale are primary suspects in the case. I am surprised the possibility of Stockdale's guilt did not occur to Bruce, as least as far as his work has made manifest. [10] Here are some reasons for believing that one or the other or both are the perpetrators of the crime.

A) SUMMARY OF THE CASE AGAINST CHARLOTTE SHELBY:

a) Possible Motives:

1. Wanted to protect her money
2. Wanted to protect Mary's "virginity"
3. Was in love with Taylor herself; was jealous
4. Taylor rejected Mary. Mary felt insulted. Charlotte was defending Mary's

honor--possibly with Mary's help

b) Evidence which suggests Shelby might have been involved:

1. Pulled revolver on James Kirkwood.
2. Was well known to be violent, possessive, manipulative.
3. Had threatened Taylor before--see Chauncey Eaton's testimony.
4. Owned a gun similar to the one used in the case.
5. Charlotte called up accountant, Marjorie Berger, the day of murder looking for Mary.
6. Mary's strange, infatuation for Taylor.
7. The mysterious nighty.
8. Taylor loved Mabel not Mary is suggested by the fact put forth that he sent only 6 flowers to Minter, 2 dozen to Mabel. That the record of this purchase did not come out in the probate papers can easily be explained by a cover-up.
9. Blonde hairs, traced to Mary Miles Minter, found on Taylor's body.
10. Mary in 1926 admitted to having seen Taylor the afternoon of the day murder took place.
11. Missing \$750,000 from Shelby money--payoff?
12. Evidence missing from police files--payoff?
13. People were out to get Mabel, making a payoff of officials easier.
14. Shelby was not questioned or indicted until later, in fact left town.
15. Margaret accuses her mother of murder.
16. Inter-family litigation over money.
17. Contemporaries, including Adela Rogers St. Johns, "knew" Shelby did it.
18. Mary was known in later years to be eccentric, alternatively kind and friendly or angry, bossy and bitter--did her love for Taylor on becoming jealous perhaps turn into hate or "You always hurt the one you love."
19. Margaret Fillmore loss of the suit against her mother in the late thirty's can be explained by officialdom's bias due to their own complicity in the cover-up. Her death by "alcohol poisoning" or ingestion sounds very

suspect to put it mildly. If what Margaret claimed was true who could really blame her for her strange behavior?

20. Testimony of Chauncey Eaton, Shelby employee, incriminates Shelby.

21. Testimony of Charlotte Whitney, Shelby employee, incriminates Shelby.

22. Marjorie Berger's testimony. What are we to make of this? While she was convicted of tax fraud this in no way would seem to justify why she would necessarily lie in a homicide investigation. If she did lie about Shelby's phone call what possible motive could she have had? Perhaps the subsequent efforts to smear Eaton and Berger by `trailing' or specifically targeting them so as to catch them in some wrong doing was merely another part of keeping the truth hidden.

23. Mary's suicide attempt with gun suggests a violent family temperament.

24. From the very beginning, local newspaper accounts assumed jealousy was the real motive behind the slaying. [11]

B) SUMMARY OF THE CASE AGAINST STOCKDALE:

1. Fitted Faith MacLean's description very closely. There is a discrepancy of height, but this seems a trivial anomaly.

2. Had ties both with Shelby and Sennett. Indeed, he appeared in films with both Mary Miles Minter and Mabel.

3. Was not brought in for questioning, even though he was Shelby's sole alibi.

4. Man's handkerchief found in the bungalow with a monogrammed "S"
(Stockdale?)

5. Stockdale's missing check stubs

Possible motive:

1. May have been acting, as he believed, to protect the honor of Shelby, Minter, Sennett and Mabel.

[Continued next issue]

NEXT ISSUE: William T. Sherman, Guest Editor:

Some Glimpses of The Shelby Family Caught up in The Taylor Case

"The Mystery of the Movie Director" by Sidney Sutherland

A Look at the Character of D.A. Thomas Lee Woolwine & His Administration

NOTES by Bruce Long:

[1]Nothing in Sanderson's recap states that Eyton arrived before Ziegler; Sanderson only states that Eyton and Harry Fellows were both involved in removing letters and other articles from the murder scene. According to Ed King (WDT: DOSSIER, pp. 275-6) Eyton arrived after Ziegler, and removed the items while Ziegler was there. At the inquest, the testimony of both Ziegler and Eyton indicate that Ziegler arrived first.

[2]There are many examples of Mabel's common use of profanity (not just profanity under extreme stress), some of them are cited in MABEL--where Hal Roach said she was "the dirtiest talking girl you ever heard" (p. 113). I consider the comments of those who knew her and worked with her to be sufficient "hard evidence" concerning her frequent use of profanity.

[3]Based on the material presented in MABEL and A DEED OF DEATH, as well as other references indicating that Samuel Goldwyn spent considerable money on Mabel's drug rehabilitation (e.g., Louella Parsons, THE GAY ILLITERATE, p. 66), I find it reasonable to assume that Mabel's stay at the Glen Springs Sanitarium in Fall 1920 was for drug rehabilitation rather than the reported "nervous breakdown"--that same expression was used elsewhere when stars were being treated for drug problems. But I don't recall ever concluding that Mabel's other reported illnesses were "covered-up instances of problems she was having with drugs"--indeed, in my criticism of A DEED OF DEATH (in WDT: DOSSIER, pp. 358-9) I argue against that line of reasoning.

[4]The total cumulative press evidence leads me to accept Woolwine's characterization of Peavey, as reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY #10: "Peavey...has shown a very deep and genuine grief over the murder of Mr. Taylor, and ... has at all times given the authorities every assistance in his power in their effort to unravel the mystery of the murder." Peavey stated that he

witnessed some verbal fireworks between Mabel and Taylor during her last visit, and that the District Attorney's office ordered him to keep quiet about it. With this in mind, it is interesting to look at the type of questions Peavey was asked on the witness stand at the coroner's inquest:

"Were you in his house on the evening when he was found dead there?"

"What time did you leave the house?"

"Where was he when you left?"

"In what part of the house were they?"

"They were seated?"

"When you went out, which way did you go out, at the front or at the back?"

Etc. In view of Peavey's subsequent claim of a cover-up, it does seem strange that those questions dealt strictly with time and geography--not one question was about the psychological atmosphere. (Was Taylor in good spirits that evening? Did anything seem to be troubling him?) There is evidence that Peavey's official "for the record" questioning by Woolwine contained similar narrowly-focused questions. So that if Peavey did indeed witness an "argument," no questions came near that territory and he did not have to lie in order to obey the cover-up directive. Peavey's statements appear credible to me, as do Mabel's statements. From her honest perspective there was no argument--just a friendly and spirited discussion; but from Peavey's honest perspective there was an argument. Regarding the possibility that Peavey was the killer, there were published rumors to that effect; and those rumors will be reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY #17 or 18.

[5]This is a good example of how the press was distorting interviews.

A reporter from the LOS ANGELES EXPRESS was present at this same interview, and quoted Mabel as having said: "(Peavey) ought to be ashamed to say that I asked him about other girls going to Mr. Taylor's house. ...And say this, please, on my word of honor, I never spoke to Henry in my life except in Mr. Taylor's presence, and can you imagine my asking before Billy about other girls? Henry has told an awful big story." The substance of this version is similar to the EXAMINER version, but there is an enormous difference in tone between "an awful big story" and "a venomous fabrication."--in the former she

seems to be gently chiding Peavey for telling a fib, in the latter she seems livid at his poisonous lie. Based on what is known about Mabel's personality and the reputation of the confrontational and sensationalizing Hearst press (EXAMINER), the EXPRESS version appears more accurate in this instance, and gives quite a different view of Mabel's attitude toward Peavey.

[6]Peavey reportedly described Mabel cutting up her pictures (reprinted in TAYLOROLOGY #6) but he did NOT characterize it as "a jealous fit of rage"--to me, her actions imply neither jealousy nor rage (perhaps just moody dissatisfaction with the way she looked in those photographs).

[7]According to the LOS ANGELES TIMES (Feb. 4, 1922) the police officially questioned Howard Fellows on Friday, Feb. 3 at the detective bureau of the Central Police Station. That edition of the newspaper also reported:

"Mr. Fellows visited the Taylor apartment at 8 p.m. on the night of the crime and though the house was lighted in all rooms he received no response at the door. He later called his employer on the telephone but failed to arouse anybody." So it does NOT appear that the police delayed in questioning Fellows. (Also, given the number of times the 1922 press misquoted or "spiced up" interviews, perhaps it confuses the historical material to refer to reported newspaper interviews as "testimony." I feel the only material which should be considered "testimony" is statements made to the official investigators or statements made under oath at depositions or on a witness stand.)

[8]The probable reason for the time discrepancy of the MacLeans' hearing the shot (assuming they were not simply misquoted) would have been their desire not to cast unjust suspicion on Mabel Normand. Some early press accounts stated that Mabel left Taylor shortly before 9:00. Perhaps the MacLeans initially told reporters that they heard the shot after 9:00 because they wanted no one to have the impression that Mabel was still present when the shot was fired. Afterwards, when Mabel's time of departure was firmly established at 7:45, the MacLeans would have changed their time of the shot accordingly, to reflect what they actually heard.

[9]In my opinion, the primary motive for a cover-up would have been to protect

the movie industry, which had been undergoing considerable adverse publicity due to the Arbuckle trials. It is reasonable to assume that the movie industry wanted the Taylor murder forgotten as quickly as possible, and used its influence towards that end.

[10]The possibility of Stockdale's guilt is mentioned in WDT: DOSSIER, pp. 329-330. That possibility is not mentioned in the Kirkpatrick or Giroux books.

[11]Sherman's long list of "evidence which suggests Shelby might have been involved" (many points of which I disagree with) does not include the single item which I consider to be THE most concrete bit of evidence against Shelby--the unfired bullet, removed from the Shelby gun, hidden by chauffeur Chauncey Eaton, and recovered by investigators in 1937. According to Sanderson, that soft-nosed lead bullet "was the same type and weight as the fatal bullet, which was extracted from Taylor's body." Press reports at the time of the murder indicated: "The weapon used was probably a revolver, the police said, since ammunition of this type is not suitable for an automatic pistol. The soft lead point becomes battered in the magazine of an automatic frequently causing it to jam. The ammunition used was an old-style, rimmed cartridge. Automatic cartridges are rimless." According to the LOS ANGELES EXAMINER (Feb. 18-19, 1922): "It has been generally known that Captain Adams early last week called into consultation one of the best known gunsmiths in America, a man past 60 who has devoted his life to a study of firearms and explosives...This expert declared...that the bullet from the wound...was .38 caliber, short, soft-nosed, single-rim, made for a Smith & Wesson .38 short barrel revolver. ...As a matter of fact, say the firearms experts, there perhaps cannot be found one pistol in thousands in Los Angeles loaded with the ancient brand of ammunition which was taken from Taylor's body." Elsewhere it was stated that this type of bullet had not been manufactured for 12 or 15 years. The circumstantial fact that Shelby's gun was evidently loaded with the same type of old ammunition that killed Taylor, is the strongest bit of physical evidence against her. This is a much stronger point of evidence than just the fact that Shelby's gun was the same type of gun

that killed Taylor. Nevertheless, "reasonable doubt" about Shelby's guilt remains.

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.uno.edu/~drif/arbuckle/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>

For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 16 -- April 1994 Editor: Bruce Long *
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What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

In this issue, William T. Sherman continues his temporary editorship of TAYLOROLOGY. Bruce Long will return as editor next issue. If anyone else has pertinent material they wish to see presented in TAYLOROLOGY, please contact bruce@asu.edu.

* Some Glimpses of The Shelby family caught up in The Taylor case

* * * * *

February 2, 1922

LOS ANGELES RECORD

Mary Miles Minter Heartbroken

Tears streaming down her pretty face, Mary Miles Minter, famous motion picture star, hurried to the door of the Taylor bungalow at noon today and asked brokenly:

"It isn't true, is it?"

"Taylor is dead," said Detective Sergeant H. J. Wallis.

"Oh my God, I can't believe it," Miss Minter cried in despair.

She turned in her grief to her mother, who had accompanied her to the bungalow court in her automobile.

"And I saw him only yesterday," she said. "His car passed mine at Seventh and Alvarado--it was the first time I knew it was gray."

* * * * *

February 4, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Miss Minter Extols Taylor

Mary Miles Minter talked yesterday at length on the subject uppermost in the minds of most members of Hollywood's film colony--the mysterious murder of William Desmond Taylor, noted film director.

Seated in the little home in Hollywood in the presence of her mother, Mrs. Selby (sic) and her grandmother, Mrs. Mary Miles, the youthful screen star discussed intimately the details of her acquaintance with the man whose assassination shook the city Thursday morning.

AND SHE DENIES, TOO, THAT SHE EVER WAS ENGAGED TO HIM OR THAT HE EVER HAD ASKED HER TO MARRY HIM.

"He looked on me as a mere child," Miss Minter said. "I could speak for

hours, extolling his virtues and those qualities which he had that endeared him to his many friends--and then not be able to do him justice."

"Married?" She repeated the interviewer's question.

"Married? I'm sure he wasn't, or he surely would have told me. We were such good friends."

Miss Minter had not seen Taylor for several months, she said, except perhaps on one or two occasions when they had passed each other on the street in their motors.

"After we came back from Europe, we just couldn't drag him away from his work," she continued. "He seemed to be wrapped up in it."

Discussing the report that Miss Normand and Taylor had been engaged at the time of his death, Miss Minter said she knew nothing of it.

"I hadn't heard of a romance between them," she said, "and I don't think the report is true. If it is true that he asked her to be his wife--well, I'm glad that he and Mabel were such good friends. She is a lovely girl. She is frank and earnest, and if she wishes to do a thing she does it. That's what I admire in her most."

She showed interest in the search which is being made for Edward F. Sands, Taylor's former valet.

"But it would be unfair to accuse him of the crime, without knowing," she concluded.

"It is possible that some crank or demented person committed the crime. No one seems to know, except the person who did it. And whoever it was doesn't seem particularly eager to tell."

* * * * *

February 8, 1922
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

(letter written to Taylor by Mary Miles Minter)

"You Wonderful Man! I Want to Go Away With You--Alone," Is Opening

Here is another unsigned love letter, in cipher, found in the effects of William D. Taylor, the motion picture director. This letter would indicate the writer's deep love for Taylor. The code is known to thousands of youngsters:

What shall I call you, you wonderful man. You are standing on the lot, the idol of an adoring company. You have just come over and put your coat on my chair. I want to go away with you, up in the hills or anywhere just so we'd be alone--all alone. In a beautiful little woodland lodge you'd be cook (as I can only make tea) and fetch the water and build the fire.

Wouldn't it be glorious to sit in a big comfy couch by a cozy warm fire with the wind whistling outside trying to harmonize with the faint sweet strains of music coming from our victrola. And then you'd have to get up and take off the record. Of course, I don't mean that, dear. Did you really suppose I intended you to take care of me like a baby?

Oh no, for this is my part. I'd sweep and dust (they make the sweetest, little dust caps, you know) and tie fresh ribbons on the snowy white curtains and feed the birds and fix the flowers, and, oh, yes, set the table and help you wash the dishes and then in my spare time I'd darn your socks.

I'd go to my room and put on something soft and flowing, then I'd lie on the couch and wait for you. I might fall asleep for a fire always makes me drowsy--then I'd wake to find two strong arms around me and two dear lips pressed on mine in a long sweet kiss -

(THE LAST PARAGRAPH OF THIS LETTER IS BEING WITHHELD BY THE EXAMINER FROM PUBLICATION AT THIS TIME)

* * * * *

August 10, 1923

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Mary To Sue Her Mother

Mary Miles Minter is Irish. She admits it and she looked it yesterday afternoon. Her big blue eyes blazed with wrath, then filmed with tears as she

told her side of the story of the discussion in her household which brought about the estrangement with her mother and sister to the breaking point.

"They never would let me be a girl, to have girl's pleasures, to do the things that other girls would do," she said. "I was never even allowed to have for myself the little pleasures shown in roles I played in pictures. I never had a doll, excepting that I held one in the pictures. I never had one all of my own. I never had a chance to play tag, or hide and go seek, or have a kiddie car. I was always petted and pampered, tutored and touted, made to believe I was something I was not, do things I did not want to do, say things I did not mean. From morning till night I had money, money, money, talked and preached to me. I have earned lots of it fairly, hate it and have none of it."

Mary's mother, Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, is reported to be seriously ill at the Good Samaritan Hospital and to be asking for her daughter. Mary is living at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Philip J. Hurn of Altadena.

"Mother is sick, quite sick, but she is not critically ill and has never asked for me," said Mary.

"Why, I just talked with her doctor. She's sick, of course, and I knew she was going to have an operation. I talked with her just last Saturday. She and my sister know just where I am, where I have been living, have my telephone number and could get me on a minute's notice." I have not disappeared, never ran away, and never tried to. I just left to be alone, to get away from the constant argument, from the posing, the nagging, the humiliation of being told that I myself have never done anything, would not have anything had it not been for the watchful eye of mother and Margaret, my older sister, three years older than I.

"When I was a baby, just 4 years old, they took me away from my home and my daddy. We went to New York and mother accepted a theatrical engagement. Soon afterward I was given a part and ever since that time mother's work has consisted of drawing my salary.

"I was always treated like a child. Told when to go to bed, when to get up, whom to meet and whom not to meet. The very people I was working with

every day were not good enough for me to associate with. I must be gracious to this and that person because they stood high socially and were wealthy.

"THE POWER OF MONEY WAS DRILLED INTO ME ON EVERY HAND. MOTHER SAID 'BE POWERFUL EVEN IF YOU HAVE TO WALK ACROSS THE GRAVES OF OTHERS TO GET IT.' SHE HAS NO SYMPATHY FOR THE MISFORTUNES OF ANOTHER. 'THE SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST' WAS HER WATCHWORD.

"SHE IS HER OWN BEST PRESS AGENT. SHE KNOWS WHAT TO SAY TO CREATE SYMPATHY FOR HERSELF. MY SISTER MARGARET IS A 'YES-GIRL.' IT'S 'YES MAMMA' THIS AND 'YES MAMMA' THAT."

All of which are but a few of the things which Miss Minter said as she announced her intention to take legal steps to secure an accounting for more than \$1,000,000 which she asserts her mother has collected on motion picture contracts of the daughter. Formal notice of intention to bring such suit has already been served said both Miss Minter and her attorney.

* * * * *

June 11, 1937

James Crenshaw

LOS ANGELES HERALD EXPRESS,

Remains True To Director

Undying Affection for Slain Man Causes Her to Decline Many Offers of Marriage

Mary Miles Minter, whose meteoric flight into film fame was cut short when a mysterious bullet snuffed out the life of William Desmond Taylor on Feb. 1, 1922, today laid bare secrets of her heart, giving details of her romance with Taylor and explaining why it was her "last romance." Her exclusive story, as told to an Evening Herald Express reporter while new efforts are being made to solve the Taylor murder, follows:

For 15 years, Mary Miles Minter has remained true to the man she

loved--to William Desmond Taylor, "the finest, bravest, dearest, truest, most sincere man I have ever known."

Even beyond death, she has remained true.

Since the mysterious and unsolved murder of the film director in 1922, the glamorous star of the silent screen has rejected numerous proposals of marriage, she revealed today; always she has chosen to remain single.

"I was engaged to Mr. Taylor," she said. "I loved him deeply and sincerely, and he loved me.

"We did not announce our engagement--I was waiting until the completion of my contract--but I wanted nothing more than to be his wife, to make a home for him....That is why I have never married."

Several times during the intervening years since 1922 there have been rumors that the former star was about to marry, but always the rumors faded away. Now she is living quietly at her home in Beverly Hills, rarely figuring in the news of the day, except as the Taylor mystery is periodically reopened for investigation.

One of her few recent "public appearances," prior to the time of the current investigation, was during an accounting trial last fall before Superior Judge Emmet H. Wilson. It involved a part of her million-dollar film earnings, but today she disclosed how little the money meant to her.

"I cared nothing about the money," she said. "That is why I let mother handle all of my business affairs. All I was interested in was the prospect of marrying the man of my choice, of making a home for him and doing all the things a loyal wife who loved her husband would want to do.

"I was going to be married and money affairs were of no interest to me. Mr. Taylor once thought that the money I earned might interfere with our happiness, and I told him I would get rid of all my money--turn it over to the other members of my family--if it stood in the way of our marriage.

"He was a great man--the finest, bravest, truest, most sincere man I have ever known--and I was reverentially glad to be his fiancée.

"Mother, could never understand how I felt about Mr. Taylor. She really cannot understand yet just how much he meant to me. She thought perhaps, that

it was only a childish infatuation. She wanted to protect me from my own impetuosity. Finally Mr. Taylor told me that mother was right, that in justice to me we should not be married until I had an opportunity to have more experience, to grow a little older and really be sure that I knew my own mind. He told me, after all, I was still a girl in my `teens while he was a mature man.

"So we agreed that we would not see each other again until the conclusion of my contract. It was then September, 1921. We agreed that the engagement was to continue, but that we should not think of marrying until I had completed all of the pictures required by the contract."

On December 23, 1921, she said she wrote the director a "good bye" note as a sort of a bluff, hoping that its climatic effect might end the heart rending weeks of waiting and at least modify the agreement to the extent that they might see each other occasionally.

But though Taylor still held to the original plan, she said he told her:

"I love you more than anything in the world. I love you with all my heart and soul."

That was the last time she saw him alive, she said, during a brief meeting of only a few minutes after she delivered the "bluff" note.

"I knew then that it could never be `good by'," she said, "that no matter how much or how long we were parted, we would be drawn together somehow, perhaps even beyond death."

Even beyond death! The words strangely prophetic in retrospect, offer a clue to the reason why Mary Miles Minter has not married.

Still lovely and attractive, she cannot forget her hopes and dreams of a home with a big fireplace and a family. She said she always hoped that the children would be sons and that they would grow up to be "like their father--like the redwoods, strong and fine and substantial."

That was what she wanted and, in its essence, all she wanted. The fireplace was especially important, for it symbolized her dreams. One could sit before an open fire with one's beloved and build flaming castles of white and red in the glowing embers.

She wrote impulsive love notes to Taylor and told him of her dream of a house...with a fireplace. The notes were discovered at the time of his death, but like all other things which linked her name with that of William Desmond Taylor, she said they were no cause for her to be ashamed.

"I was sorry they were found," she said. "But I am not sorry I wrote them. I am glad I wrote them. Through them I was speaking to my fiancée, and I WAS WRITING FROM MY HEART, JUST AS ANY OTHER GIRL IN LOVE WITH HER BETROTHED WOULD DO.

"Mr. Taylor was the finest of gentleman in every sense of the word. Nothing ever happened that could have possibly made me think otherwise and much did happen to confirm my admiration--apart from my love--for him, but I did have the right--and, if you please, the honor--of expressing my love to him in my own way, whether my very personal expressions were made public or not.

"It is unfortunate that in sifting the evidence in a case of this kind so much immaterial matter is dragged before the public gaze, regardless of the effect on the lives of innocent people. I feel it was an outrage that the letters were made public property, since they were written in 1919 when I was 17 years old, three years before his death, but I say again, I am glad they were written."

Miss Minter made it clear that she is not leading a life of futile mourning. She realizes that there is nothing to be gained by accentuating a heartache year after year. But whether in future years any other man will appear to make her forget the past, so that he may claim her hand, no one can foretell.

The fifteen years which have passed since the death of William Desmond Taylor are no criterion of what the future may hold, yet Mary Miles Minter leaves no doubt that what has not happened in those years--her refusal to marry when it was evident to all her friends that there was often the opportunity--is something more than an idle gesture.

* * * * *

December 26, 1929

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

(excerpt from interview with Charlotte Shelby)

...Outside Christmas crowds and laden automobiles moved back and forth.

Margaret Shelby Fillmore, ALWAYS A CLOSE PAL AND COMPANION of her mother, sat near by...

* * * * *

August 17, 1937

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

William Desmond Taylor's ghost hovered over the courtroom of Superior Judge Parker Wood yesterday as a trial of a \$48,750 lawsuit between a mother and daughter began.

That the name of Taylor, murdered 14 years ago, will figure prominently in the case, was indicated in the questioning of jurors who were asked if they would be prejudiced against Margaret Shelby Fillmore or Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, her mother.

1. It should be developed that Mrs. Fillmore had stated her mother was involved in the Taylor murder case and in return for "protection" paid \$133,000.

2. Mrs. Shelby had been named in print as a possible suspect.

3. Mrs. Fillmore protected her mother, or appeared before the grand jury in the recent reopening of the case.

Mrs. Fillmore charges in her suit that her mother, also the parent of Mary Miles Minter, famous in the days of silent pictures, wrongfully took \$18,500 from a joint safety deposit box. Mrs. Shelby has denied the charges.

* * * * *

August 18, 1937

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

'My Money' Says Mrs. Shelby

"My Margaret knew it was not her money. It was to be hers after my death, but I am not dead yet."

Militantly, Mrs. Charlotte Shelby thus yesterday explained her eldest

daughter, Margaret Shelby Fillmore, was only a "dummy" in the many stock transactions made in her name.

And so, she reasoned, it would have been impossible for her to defraud her daughter of \$48,750 as Mrs. Fillmore charges in a suit on trial before Superior Judge Parker Wood.

"Yes," she admitted under questioning by Mrs. Fillmore's attorney, Richard Cantillon, "I deposited large sums of money to Margaret's account and had stocks made out in her name, but she knew they were not really hers."

"Neither of my daughters had the capacity for thrift. They had nothing of their own, except what I gave them. I set up a 'Hetty Green' bank account as a basis for their future fortunes. But it was all my money."

* * * * *

August 20, 1937

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Taylor's Name in Fillmore Suit

"Are you afraid I'll bring up the Taylor murder case?"

These were the words of Margaret Shelby Fillmore to her mother, Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, in the PSYCHOPATHIC WARD of the General Hospital, where the former was being held, according to her testimony to court yesterday.

The reference to the 15 year old murder of William Desmond Taylor was made at the trial of Mrs. Fillmore's \$48,750 suit against her mother.

"I asked her why she had me committed," Mrs. Fillmore told Judge Parker Wood. "I said, 'Are you afraid I'll bring up the Taylor case?'"

"Mother exclaimed 'For God's sake, don't go into that.'"

Mrs. Fillmore said she was incarcerated shortly after discovering that nearly \$50,000 belonging to her had been removed from a joint safety deposit box she held with Mrs. Shelby.

"I told her I was well and asked her what she had done with my money," Mrs. Fillmore testified.

"In her gushing manner she said, 'My child, don't oppose me in this; I just want you to get well.'"

Mrs. Fillmore said that in 1925, when her mother went to Europe, with a bag full of bonds, some of which belonged to her that "men have been very bad for our family," and that her mother resented her marrying.

"I DON'T TRUST MEN. I don't trust your husband and that is why I want to take your bonds with me," Mrs. Fillmore quoted her mother as having said.

In direct contradiction to her mother's testimony, Mrs. Fillmore testified she was not dependent upon her mother and that since she had been a mere child she had been neglected in favor of Mary Miles Minter, the once noted film actress, her sister.

* * * * *

September 4, 1937
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Fillmore Drinking Told By Doctor

"I don't know whether Margaret Fillmore drank so much because she was nervous or was nervous because she drank so much."

So testified Dr. Victor Parkin, psychiatrist and consultant, yesterday in the trial before Superior Judge Parker Wood in which Mrs. Fillmore seeks to recover \$48,750 from her mother Charlotte Shelby.

Cross examined by Richard Cantillon and John Glover, attorneys for Mrs. Fillmore, Doctor Parkin disclosed that eight weeks had elapsed from the date on which he had examined the sister of Mary Miles Minter and the date when the certificate committing her to the psychopathic ward was issued.

* The following article about the Taylor mystery was written by Sidney Sutherland who also co-authored Mabel Normand's posthumous autobiography which appeared in Liberty magazine in 1930. Although Bruce discounts this early examination of the case as "error filled," (a charge I do not wholly agree with myself), it is at least worth reprinting for giving students of the Taylor case an idea about how Shelby and Minter's alleged involvement in the case first became more generally known and accredited.

* * * * *

February 9, 1929

Sidney Sutherland

LIBERTY

THE MYSTERY OF THE MOVIE DIRECTOR

Did a Woman Dressed as a Man Kill William Desmond Taylor?

If a scenario writer proffered to the movie magnates of Hollywood a plot embodying the incidents involved in the murder of William Desmond Taylor, the manuscript probably would be rejected on the ground that it would be an affront to the intelligence of film fans to tell them a story so grotesque, so bizarre, so fanciful, and so impossible!

Yet, not only was Taylor murdered in circumstances so sensational and incredible that his assassination has never been solved, but the case involved famous actresses, lovely women, mysterious jealousies, narcotic addicts, millions of dollars, and ruined reputations -- a mystery so beguiling and engrossing and puzzling that it may well be included in this series of articles dealing with famous murders of recent years.

This, then, is the reconstructed and summarized tale of Taylor's murder, a homicide surpassing the most bewildering detective story ever written.

William Desmond Taylor's whole life is cloaked in mystery. When he reached Hollywood he was a mystery; he lived a mysterious life there; and when he died by violence he left behind him a mystery which never has been penetrated.

The record of his early days came partly to light after his body was found carefully laid out on the floor of his bungalow.

William Cunningham Deane-Tanner was born in Carlow, Ireland, in 1877. He was the son of Major Deane-Tanner, a florid, hot-tempered, imperious British army officer. The family lived on the Bellevue Estates at Cappoquin, in County Waterford, thirty miles northeast of Cork.

William (he became presently the Bill Taylor of our story) was the third child in the Deane-Tanner family. Nellie and Grace preceded him, and Dennis followed. The family moved to Dublin and the children were given excellent educations. [1]

A distinct break between the choleric major and William came when the latter was in his teens. The army officer wished his son to prepare for a military life and when he failed in his examinations the old man kicked him out. There is no definite record as to when Taylor came to the United States. There is a vague yarn that he and Dennis appeared in Nebraska and worked on a farm adjoining the farms of other young British remittance men.

It is known definitely that on December 7, 1901, in the Little Church Around the Corner in New York City, William Cunningham Deane-Tanner married Ethel May Harrison, the daughter of a New York broker. William then was vice-president and manager of the English Antique Shop at 240 Fifth Avenue. The young couple lived in Larchmont, where William joined the Larchmont Yacht Club. He was exceedingly popular there and with his neighbors.

In 1903 a daughter was born to the pair. They named her Ethel Daisy. At noon on October 23, 1908, William got his hat and told his employees at the antique shop that he was going out to luncheon. He did not return that day, and the next morning he telephoned from a hotel asking his cashier to send him \$600 by messenger.

The money was sent at once--and nobody ever saw William Cunningham Deane-Tanner again! With no word of farewell or explanation to his wife and daughter William disappeared as completely as if he had dived overboard from a transatlantic liner.

His life's film now becomes almost a total blank for many years. After he was dead there were rumors to the effect that William Desmond Taylor (as he renamed himself) had been a mining prospector in Colorado, in the Klondike, and in Montana. There is a story that he played in a stock company in the music halls of Skagway, Fairbanks, and other Alaskan towns. But of definite data there are none. [2] Following testimony on the part of a hotel clerk in the Adirondack Mountains, Mrs. Deane-Tanner found in 1912 that she

had adequate grounds for divorce in the state of New York, where in those days only proof of adultery would win a decree. It seems William had spent a week in the mountain resort with an unnamed woman. In 1914 Mrs. Deane-Tanner married Edward L. C. Robins, treasurer of the S. M. Robins Company, which owned Delmonico's restaurant and other eating places in the downtown financial district.

A few years later Ethel and her mother were watching a motion picture. Suddenly a tall, slender, rather handsome figure appeared on the screen. The older woman instantly recognized the gray eyes, the thin, chiseled features.

"There's your father!" she exclaimed. The program identified the actor as William Desmond Taylor. Ethel wrote to him and presently he answered. A regular correspondence followed, and after a while Taylor came east and met his daughter. He never again saw the woman he had deserted.

Before we proceed with William, a word about his younger brother, Dennis, is of interest. Dennis, too, appeared out of a mysterious past and married an American girl who bore him two children. [3] He too became associated with an antique shop on lower Fifth Avenue. And he too disappeared suddenly, deserting his family and leaving no word behind. From that day to this, Dennis has never been heard of. His wife learned of Taylor's success in the movies, so she moved to Monrovia, California, and until he died her brother-in-law sent her fifty dollars a month.

When Taylor first reached Hollywood he got a job as an actor, but was soon made a director. His progress thereafter was phenomenal. He was the leading director of the Famous Players-Lasky Company, and at the time of his death was president of the Motion Picture director's Association. [4] He was highly respected, both as an artist and as a man.

His health was quite frail, and he suffered from stomach trouble. He even wept to England in search of relief. Like many other men in high place in the movies, his career threw him in contact with lovely young girls whose temperament were unstable and their mentality and learning meager. There is no denial of the fact that he was no St. Anthony in his relations with these fair scatterbrains. [5]

But neither is there any denial of the fact that many young girls owed their screen success to his help and counsel. Nor that he waged a bitter, single handed war on the rascals who flourished during what may be called the Dope Age of the movie industry. Sudden riches, adulation, fame, popularity--these things turned the heads of scores of young actresses, and having exhausted all the other thrills many of them turned to narcotics. Taylor, it is said, never relaxed in his warfare against the dope peddlers, and for a time after he died the authorities hunted in those underworld circles for the motive and the assassin.

The world went to war. Taylor continued to make pictures. A year after his adopted country went to the aid of the Allies, Taylor enlisted, preferring the company of his own kith. The official record:

"W. D. Taylor, 1127 Orange St., Los Angeles; age 41; profession, director; born Cork, Ireland; height 5'11"; British subject; enlistment attested at Chicago, July 3, 1918, by the British Recruiting Mission in America."

Taylor reached Hounslow Barracks December 2, 1918, a few weeks after the Armistice was signed. He was then sent to Windsor, Nova Scotia, in the summer of 1919, where promotion to a captaincy quickly came his way. He was discharged shortly thereafter. [6] And, to leap ahead of our story a bit, his funeral was one of the most impressive ever held in Los Angeles.

His casket, hidden beneath a Union Jack and piled high with flowers was guarded at each corner by a uniformed representative of Britain's colonies--a Canadian, a Tommy, an Anzac, and a kiltie-clad Scot. Every person of prominence in the picture industry attended the services.

Another enigmatic figure appears in the drama--Edward F. Sands. Supposed to have been Taylor's valet and chauffeur, his real relations with the director have thus far withstood explanation. It is known that he also was in the British army. [7] But there his name was Edward Fitz-Strathmore; and where he hailed from, and what was his exact status in the Taylor household, are questions as unfathomed as the void he disappeared into shortly before the murder.

Sands seems to have been more than a valet; for when Taylor went to England late in 1921 because of his health, Sands ran amuck. He forged his master's name to innumerable checks; he pawned his jewelry; he wrecked two of his cars; he stole nearly all his clothes; and apparently he had also blackmailed him from time to time. [8]

When Taylor returned Sands vanished. He has never been seen since. [9] Taylor is quoted as having said he would punish his valet for his misdeeds.

With Sands gone, Taylor hired a Negro to replace him--a falsetto-voiced, crochet-work and fancy-work addict named Henry Peavey. Peavey was a queer chap and his testimony at the inquest was a weird mixture of sonorous phrases, effeminate outcries, curious concealments, and amusing disclosures about life in the Taylor home. Poor Peavey, how he flung himself on the coffin and sobbed! But he declined to reveal intimate details of his late master's callers and their affairs.

Two celebrated actresses now appear in the picture, Mary Miles Minter and Mabel Normand. At the time (early 1922) Mary was probably the most popular actress on the screen. [10] She had even passed Mary Pickford in the esteem of her fans. Taylor had directed her in *Anne of Green Gables* and other pictures, and she was madly enamored of him. Her letters and lingerie interested the detectives who searched the Taylor premises for the clew they were never to find. [11]

The murder of Taylor and the discovery of her belongings in his bungalow effectually killed Mary Miles Minter in pictures. A desperate effort was made at the time by Famous Players-Lasky to salvage their investment in her, for on their shelves were several of her films waiting for release. These were shot out to the exhibitors as quickly as possible while the movie magnates tried to divert notoriety from the star. [12]

But they finally got out of their contract with her as cheaply as they could. They had paid her more than \$1,000,000 in salary, and this fortune was cause of numerous quarrels between Mary and her mother, Mrs. Charlotte Shelby.

Mrs. Shelby lamented bitterly the publicity that ushered her daughter

into oblivion. She had striven mightily to end Mary's infatuation with Taylor.

Mabel Normand was then riding the crest of her remarkable popularity as a comedienne. [13] A deep friendship existed between her and Taylor. It was owing to his excellent literary tastes that she filled her library shelves with standard authors. They spent much time together, in theaters watching and studying the latest developments in motion pictures, and discussing scenarios and "business" which would improve his status as a director and increase her fame.

Mabel might be designated correctly as the "play girl of the western world." Completely indifferent to public opinion and to such conventions as might cramp her idea of having a good time, her private life was as amusing and hectic and startling in its caprices as her clowning was excruciating in her pictures.

Yet until the Taylor murder case broke upon a curious and amazed world Mabel never had made the front page of the newspapers with any of her escapades. [14] Vivacious, fascinating in her dark beauty, brilliant and wealthy, the irresponsible little film clown had danced through life, treading dangerously near trouble with her experiments in the search for thrills.

Taylor was an earnest but somewhat ineffective balance wheel in their companionship. He strove to make his playmate more sensible, and was in despair at times because of her irresponsibility.

The hook-up in the Taylor case, according to the authorities of Los Angeles, seems to have been this: Mary Miles Minter, the blonde beauty with long curls and cherub face, loved Taylor; Taylor was in love with Mabel; and Mabel regarded the director as a worldly-wise, polished and congenial friend and jolly companion, en tete-a-tete or at the famous film colony parties.

I talked with her last year about the Taylor murder. I think that for the first time she gave a coherent, running account of the mystery. A painstaking investigation of the official archives, now yellowing with age in their steel resting place, and among the authorities, now disposed to forget

the murder until the murderer turns up, seems to substantiate the comedienne's story in every important detail.

"It was because of Bill Taylor's counsel in the matter of literature that I saw him his last day alive," she said. "We used to discuss the new authors with a view to the adaptation of their work to the screen. One of our favorite writers was Ethel M. Dell. We thought *The Rocks of Valpre* had tremendous possibilities.

"On Wednesday, February 1, Sennett gave me a day off saying he would phone me what time to show up next day. I awoke about noon, and wondered how I'd spend the day and evening. I thought it would be a good time to do something I'd been putting off, as usual, since the Christmas holidays.

"I had received so many beautiful gifts, and there were numerous duplicates. I decided to load my car with these things and go to the jewelers, where I could exchange some and have others engraved. I would also leave my personal jewelry I'd taken out for the holiday parties in my safe-deposit boxes at Hellman's Night and Day Bank.

"So I had William Davis, the chauffeur, carry the packages out to the car, and then I scurried into my clothes. I explained to Mamie Owens, my maid, that I was going to my two jewelers, Brocks' and Feagan's, and would telephone her from some place down there.

"I was almost too late. I got into Brocks' store just before closing time, six o'clock, told them what I wanted, and then hurried over to Feagan's, where they were just locking up. All this, and what followed, was carefully checked on afterward by the police.

"I then ordered Davis to drive me to the Hellman bank at Sixth and Main streets. While at the bank I decided to call my house and tell Mamie, I'd dine downtown and see Harold Lloyd's new picture.

"I called up my apartment. I lived at 3089 West Seventh Street, a dozen blocks or so from Taylor's bungalow apartment at 404-B South Alvarado Street.

"Mamie answered the phone. 'But you can't go to the picture tonight, Miss Normand,' she said. 'Mr. Sennett called up after you left and said for you to be ready to go on location tomorrow morning at seven o'clock with all

your make-up on. And Mr. Taylor just called up and said he had two books for you, and when could you call by for them, or should he bring them over?'

"I told her I would drive by his place and come on home.

"As I left the vault I glanced at my wrist watch. It was nearly seven o'clock. I started to step into my car, and suddenly felt a great appetite for peanuts. I looked around. Standing across the street against the curb was a peanut man's push cart.

"I told Davis to wait, skipped across, and bought two bags of peanuts and one of popcorn, handing the man a ten dollar bill, the smallest I had. He couldn't change it and I pretended to be surprised and angry. Then I laughed and went into a drug store and got the change.

"I went back to my car and told Davis to take me to Bill's. As we drove through the traffic I saw a news stand and told him to stop. I bought two magazines.

"Then we went on to Bill's house. It was part of an attractive arrangement. There were eight little two-story cottages built around a U, three on each side and two at the end of the U fronting on Alvarado Street. I don't know who lived in five of them; but the second on the left was occupied by Edna Purviance, the third was Taylor's and the last one on the right was rented by Douglas MacLean and his wife. [15]

"I told Davis I'd be only a little while, and asked him to sweep out the peanut shells I'd scattered all over the floor of the car. I got out, left my magazines on the seat and walked up the left-hand cement walk to Bill's little house. I carried a bag of peanuts to show my gratitude for the two books he had for me!"

A peculiarity the director had was that he never closed his front door during the day and seldom at night, a point Mrs. MacLean emphasized in her testimony at the inquest, as you shall see.

"When I reached Bill's open door," said Mabel Normand. "I heard a voice inside: he was using the telephone. So I walked around the flower beds a few minutes until he had quit talking and hung up. Then I rang his bell.

"He came to the door, smiled and held out both hands.

"`Hello, Mabel darling,' he said. `I know what you've come for--two books I've just got for you."

"`Righto, my bright duck,' I said going in. `And I brought you a present, too. Guess what it is.' I held the bag of peanuts behind me.

"`No man's brain could possibly guess what you'd buy,' he retorted. `But I'll bet it's something fine. Come on in and have dinner. I've just finished mine, but Peavey can fix you something.'

"`Thanks, Bill, but Mamie's going to feed me in bed tonight,' I said, and told him of my appointment for seven o'clock next morning.

"`But you'll have a cocktail, won't you? he said. I said, `Sure,' and solemnly presented him with the peanuts.

"He laughed and put the bag on top of his piano. They found it there untouched the next morning. Then he shouted to Peavey to mix a couple of cocktails, and returned to his seat in front of his writing table. The whole top of the table was covered with canceled Checks, and he called me over. I sat on the arms of his chair, and he pointed at the litter and said:

"`Look, Mabel, what that damned fellow Sands did to me. Nearly every one of those checks is a forgery; and, do you know, he did such a good job that to save my life I can't tell which are my signatures and which are forgeries! I've been over them twenty times, and I'm going mad. I've no idea how my account stands at the bank, and I don't think we'll ever get it straightened out. Just look at this.'

"He picked up one check he knew he had signed and beside it held one he was uncertain about. Neither of us could see any difference in the signatures.

"I asked what he was going to do about it.

"`What on earth can I do?' he wailed. `I'll never get it straightened out--never. As for Sands, of course he's been missing for months. If they ever find him, you can bet I'll do plenty to him.'

"Peavey came in with cocktails on a little silver tray.

"He put them down, where the glasses were found the next morning, and bowed low in his funny way.

"How do you do, Miss Normand," he said in his shrill voice. "I trust all is well with you."

"All's well, Henry, thanks," I said. Henry had been released from jail that morning, Bill having gone down to get him out of some trouble he'd got into. He asked Bill if that was all for him. [16]

"Yes, Henry," Bill said. "Clean up out there and trot along. And don't worry; I think I can fix up everything downtown tomorrow."

Henry fluttered about a while, and then bowed as he went out, leaving the door wide open as he always did. It was about seven o'clock. He left each evening after dinner and came the next morning at seven.

After he'd gone, Bill got the books he had for me and unwrapped them, and we glanced through them. Then we talked about my work and his, and about any number of things we were interested in.

Then he offered to call Fellows, his chauffeur, and take me home, but I told him that my car was at the curb. He said he'd telephone me at nine o'clock, and I said, all right, but that Mamie wouldn't disturb me if I'd gone to sleep by then.

He walked down toward the street with me. In the cottage next to Edna's we saw a man sitting near the window under a light reading newspapers.

How important the insignificant sometimes turns out to be! I tremble even yet, nearly six years later, to think what they might have done to me if this man had not told of seeing us leaving together and of glancing out a few minutes later to see Taylor striding back to his bungalow.

When we reached the curb, Davis was standing at the door of my car, his feet in the litter of the peanut shells. Bill laughed when he saw them and we chatted for a moment. I looked back, and we wafted kisses on our hands to each other as long as I could see him standing there on the edge of the sidewalk.

"I never saw him again. And he didn't telephone me at nine o'clock, as he had promised, for he was lying on the floor of his living room shot through the back and dead within a few moments after I left him."

Taylor walked back to his cottage, and presumably sat down again to look

at the checks on his table. In the morning he was found lying on the floor, coat buttoned, lapels smoothed down, arms lying straight beside the body, feet close together, trousers unwrinkled.

The assassin had evidently slipped into the living room and hidden behind the open door after Taylor and Mabel had left to go to her car.

For an hour after his body was discovered by the terrified Peavey the next morning it was thought that he had died of heart disease, as the bullet wound between the small of the back and his left shoulder blade was not noticed until the ambulance came. [17]

At the inquest everybody who knew anything testified, Mrs. Douglas MacLean said that a little before eight o'clock, just after Mabel Normand had departed, she had heard a pistol shot. She and her maid glanced at each other, and Mrs. MacLean stepped to her little upstairs veranda in time to see a short, stocky man, with a muffler around his neck and his cap pulled down, come out of Taylor's cottage, close the door carefully behind him, glance casually about, and then walk down the steps. [18]

He turned to the left and disappeared between the Taylor bungalow and the house east of it into a little court where the Taylor garage opened on the alley.

Douglas MacLean also heard the shot and discussed with his wife the possibility that the man she had seen leaving had fired it. But nothing was done, and Peavey found the door closed the next morning. Surprised, he rang the bell, and finally opened it--to come upon his master's body.

When his excited shrieks startled the courtyard, Edna Purviance telephoned Mabel, and Mabel almost became hysterical.

Then Edna called Mary Miles Minter, and Mary became wholly so. [19] She started to run to the front door and Mrs. Shelby barred her way.

"You're not going over there," the mother said firmly.

"But Bill Taylor's been murdered!" the little blonde screamed.

They stood and argued about it a while, and Mary fell weeping into a chair before a mirror. Suddenly she noticed her reflection and was struck by the expression on her own face.

"Look, mother," she cried; "look at my expression. Don't I register frozen horror perfectly?"

"Hold it, dear," cried Mrs. Shelby, running around in front to see.

Then Mary got out of the house and hastened to the courtyard, where now detectives, newspaper men, movie directors, and tenants were milling around in great confusion. When she arrived she promptly put on a mad scene, screaming and calling, "Bill, my darling, speak to me!" and tearing her fair curls, and dashing to and from across the flower beds--and trying to get into the house.

The police prevented her entrance, for they had already found much feminine finery and dainty lingerie, some of it monogrammed with three M's, and many startling letters--letters which presently became a passport ushering Mary Miles Minter into oblivion. [20]

And then the storm burst with unbelievable fury about Mabel Normand's head.

"I had donned the Spanish costume I was using in the picture," she told me, going on with her story, "and was seated before my mirror finishing my make-up, when Edna Purviance telephoned.

"I was incredulous, then stunned. Soon there was a wild ringing at my doorbell and a wilder clamor outside, and when the door was opened the wildest mob I ever saw tumbled into my living room--detectives and newspaper men and press photographers and curious strangers. They eddied around me and hurled a million questions that I couldn't understand, much less answer coherently.

"Most of them left after I'd told them all I could remember. Some remained, clustered around me where I sat crying, and went on with their questioning.

"Then it dawned on me, hours after they had raided my apartment, that it might be in the minds of some of them that I had murdered my friend! That ghastly possibility made me frantic, and I imagine that the more I talked the less sense I made out of what was, and what was soon proved to be, a perfectly innocent coincidence--that I happened to have been the last person

who saw Taylor alive except his murderer.

"Everybody who knew me or knew Taylor was questioned again and again by the authorities. Henry Peavey told of leaving me alone with Taylor, and of finding his body the next morning, and Mrs. Douglas MacLean told of seeing the assassin leaving Bill's front door. Pressed to describe this individual, she found it difficult, since he had a muffler around his neck and his cap pulled down over his eyes.

"But she knew Sands, and said it wasn't he. Sands has never been found.

"She seemed startled when some astute questioner in the district attorney's office suggested that the slayer might have been a woman dressed in man's clothing. She reflected a moment and acknowledged that the killer was built more like a man than a woman."

So far as getting anywhere is concerned, that is the end of the Taylor murder mystery. I asked the district attorney's office not long ago what steps were being taken to solve the case. The answer was that until somebody showed up with the murderer's name and address the case might be regarded as closed.

Mary Miles Minter and her mother went to Europe for several years. There was talk of court action because of their wrangles over Mary's fortune, but they never got that far with it. Mary put on weight and last year returned to America. At last accounts she was living quietly in Hollywood.

Mabel Normand continued her career with vicissitudes, until finally she eloped with Lew Cody and was married to him. Reports from Los Angeles are that they are living in Beverly Hills, Lew working at a studio and Mabel apparently out of pictures.

Edna Purviance, the famous leading woman of Charlie Chaplin in many of his great films was involved in a subsequent shooting, and she, too, stepped out of pictures for a while. Not long ago she returned from Europe with the remark that she would soon reappear on the screen.

In southern California, official and popular opinion is to the effect that Taylor was killed by a woman disguised as a man. A name is mentioned, but it cannot be printed, because to date no material evidence has been found

connecting the suspect with the murder of the movie director.

8) A LOOK AT THE CHARACTER OF DIST.-ATTY. THOMAS LEE WOOLWINE AND HIS ADMINISTRATION

* * * * *

June 24, 1915

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Woolwine Too Jealous; Dean Quits Office

Harry Ellis Dean, chief deputy district attorney, resigned yesterday. The resignation was accepted by District Attorney Woolwine to take effect immediately, and when the chief deputy walked out of the office yesterday evening it was not to return. There is, therefore, a \$4000 a year position to be filled.

Mr. Dean wrote a long letter of resignation, but it is nearly all preface until the following sentence is reached:

"I am not in accord with your official acts and administrative policies."

The characteristics which he found objectionable were cited by Dean in a verbal statement.

"Mr. Woolwine," said the retiring chief deputy as he was about to take his hat and go, "is constitutionally devious.

"He has an artistic temperament.

"He has a passion for public approbation.

"In carrying out his formula for giving everyone a square deal he has had to run contrary to his constitutional peculiarities; but they kept cropping up; they are always cropping up; he can't keep them down.

"He is not only fond of the limelight; he wants it all. Every time my name appeared in the papers 'Tom' jumped on me; he couldn't stand it.

"Did you and Mr. Woolwine disagree about the Sebastian trial?"

"No; he took all the responsibility for instituting that case and for its conduct."

Later in the day Mr. Dean gave out a second letter to Mr. Woolwine in which he said:

"Supplementary to my letter of resignation to you this morning, I desire to add the following reasons among a number of which I will not make mention of, which to my mind tended to undermine the efficiency of the office.

"The incompetence of your secret service department is subject of general comment. This department you were early in your administration advised would make or break you, and with the proof of your utter lack of capacity of your chief detective brought to your attention, at all times met with your prompt resentment in unmistakable terms. Successful results in the trial of cases necessitates the gathering of evidence by an efficient department of secret service, and to the prevention and detection of crime efficient results cannot be secured unless the department head is experienced in his work, with an apt mind for accurate deductions in the detection of crime reporting to the office.

"For weeks the county has been infested with bunco steerers, large amounts of money have been fleeced from visitors to Southern California, without any attempt upon the part of your secret service head to detect the operators, and society remains unprotected.

"Your administration has to its credit about three convictions for liquor selling in the entire county. This is a sad commentary on the efficiency of the office or indicates the policy entirely inconsistent with your pre-election pledges. While it is true you did at all times refuse to state your views upon the subject, yet you were well aware that the voters advocating liquor regulations realized the importance of placing in the office of district attorney a man who would vigorously enforce any legislation that they might enact, and efficiency enforce the laws then provided by the statute. This matter I have commented upon several times, and have stated in unequivocal terms to you, that a continuance of the dilatory methods now employed would have to be satisfactorily explained to the voters

in the affected districts."

District Attorney Woolwine only smiled when he was asked for a statement. He thereafter met all questions with that famous rejoinder: "I have nothing to say."

Nor would he intimate who is to be Dean's successor. Asa Keyes and A. H. Van Cott, deputies in the office have been mentioned.

Dean's resignation was a surprise to Woolwine. Several persons in his office knew about it before he himself found the letter on his desk. The resignation was tendered to take effect July 6 or "at your pleasure." Woolwine accepted the letter suggestion and made it immediately.

Mr. Woolwine's reply was as follows:

"Dear Sir: I beg to acknowledge receipt of your favor of June 22, 1915, in which you tender your resignation as chief deputy district attorney to take effect July 6, 1915, or at such earlier date as may be my pleasure. In reply thereto, I desire to say that your resignation is hereby accepted to take effect immediately for the reason that I do not believe that my useful purpose may be served by delaying the matter until the sixth of July.

* * * * *

August 17, 1916

LOS ANGELES RECORD

Accuses Woolwine of Unfair Play

S. A. Woodford, campaign manager for Harry Ellis Dean, candidate for District Attorney, charges unfair tactics on the part of Woolwine supporters at a meeting held last night at 1011 Central Avenue under the auspices of the Non-Partisan league.

"Our meeting had just been called to order," declares Woodford, "when three machines, containing Frank Dominquez, Claire Woolwine, Thos. Lee Woolwine himself and others, pulled up outside and a big commotion started. They brought along a drum and fife corps and our audience stampeded to the street to see what the fuss was all about.

"They tried to address our audience. The crowd grew from 200 to 500.

Finally I leaped upon Dominguez's machine and made an appeal for fair play.

"The crowd derided the newcomers and finally became so menacing that they put on power and fled from the scene."

* * * * *

September 27, 1916

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Cannot Trace Lost Ballots

If Precinct is Thrown Out Woolwine Elected

The disappearance of 102 primary election ballots cast in precinct 3, national Soldier's home district, remains a mystery. The grand jury and the eight judges who are conducting the recount utterly failed yesterday in their attempt to trace the ballots. While the probe will be continued today by the judges, Deputy District Attorney Doran said last night that the grand jury had followed all the leads imaginable without result and that body is not likely to resume the investigation.

The election officials who presided at the precinct in question, Nelson Bowerman, inspector; Newton H. Culver, Reuben Oehier, William A. Church, Luther B. Edinborough and Harry A. Strauss, appeared before the grand jury and all testified to the parts they had taken in handling of the ballots.

The officials said the missing ballots were placed in the envelope for Republican ballots, and taken together with the other ballots and placed in the treasurer's vault at the Soldier's Home, Inspector Bowerman being an orderly in the treasurer's office. He said the following morning he took the ballots to the express office and shipped them to the Registrar of Voters.

Registrar McAleer and several of his deputies were called before the judges. Mr. McAleer told of the methods applied in the handling of ballots and deputies testified to have received the ballots from No. 3 precinct. Margaret Harrington's signature was attached to the envelope which should have contained the ballots. She could not, of course, remember distinctly this particular envelope.

Judge Monroe instructed the man in charge of the county warehouse to search all the ballot boxes for the missing ballots and report this morning.

Should the ballots be found in the boxes or any other place there is a legal question as to whether they can be counted, and the search for them is more important in the matter of fixing the blame for their disappearance. It is held by prominent attorneys that the ballots, even if accidentally lost, are invalid because of the opportunity for tampering with them.

Whether the returns indicated on the tally sheets should be taken as the result of the original count is to be decided by the judges, probably today. Dist.-Atty. Woolwine and W. T. Helms, his principal opponent, were instructed last night to prepare briefs on the question.

Mr. Woolwine contends the count on the tally sheets is of no consequence when the ballots are missing. He believes that when a court is conducting a recount it can recognize only the ballots that are taken from the various envelopes and if the ballots are missing the precinct must be thrown out.

There is a provision of law which states that the result indicated on the tally sheets must be accepted as correct unless there is evidence to the contrary. This would compel the District Attorney to furnish the proof of fraud. Mr. Woolwine does not believe this provision should be applied in this particular case.

Should the entire precinct be thrown out, Mr. Woolwine will be an easy victor in the recount. According to the figures last night, he had gained 150 votes, needing but ten more to the tally sheet. Precinct No. 3, according to the tally sheet gave Mr. Woolwine 40 and Mr. Helms 33. If they are not recounted Mr. Woolwine will gain forty-three votes on Mr. Helms, more than enough to elect.

Mr. Woolwine said last night he has never charged fraud in connection with the disappearance of the ballots, but is unable to conceive of a legitimate reason for the ballots being lost.

There are about 500 precincts yet to be counted. The work should be completed tomorrow night, the judges say.

Morris P. Light, an election inspector in precinct No. 327 (?) charged

with falsifying the tallies at the recent primary election, was arraigned before Justice Forbes, yesterday and released on his own recognizance till the preliminary hearing on October 5.

* * * * *

April 28, 1918

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Would Muzzle Steffens Kind

Speaking before 506 members of the Texas Society at their annual picnic yesterday at Sycamore Grove, Dist.-Atty. Thomas Lee Woolwine severely criticized all anarchists, pacifists, and in particular Lincoln Steffens, the writer and lecturer who was prevented by the police from giving an address in San Diego Friday evening.

"Steffens represents a type of plausible, curiously sincere, but utterly dangerous anarchist," Dist.-Atty. Woolwine said. "His kind camouflage the term anarchist by calling themselves 'philosophical anarchists'--whatever that they may mean. He tells us that he does not stand for violence, nor the destruction of the government, nor of constituted authority by force, and yet that is the very thing that his utterances beyond doubt indicate and by his conduct he gives aid and comfort to those who outrage and seek to destroy all governmental authority.

"While professing to believe in the Christian sentiment of 'Peace on earth, good will to men,' he is the ready champion of the assassin, dynamiter and the revolutionist. For years he has taken an affectionate interest in the 'boys' who put to death by assassination twenty innocent laboring men in a newspaper building in the city of Los Angeles.

"Shortly after the arrest of David Caplan, and Matthew A. Schmidt, both of whom were accused at that time with the McNaramas of the murder of the men, Steffens journeyed cross the continent, saw me in my office and implored me not to try the cases, but to allow the defendants their liberty. I was amazed at his sincerity and earnestness in advocating this preposterous course. He actually broke down and wept in the excess of his emotion,

pleading the cause of the `boys'--the dear dynamiters who had done nothing worse than to assist in the assassination of twenty human beings.

"I answered Steffens to the effect that I looked on the defendants as cold-blooded murders, and that I would use every power at my command to convict them. Prosecutions and convictions followed, and these destroyers of human lives are now serving their respective terms in penitentiaries.

"The hazard of allowing such men as Steffens to inject their subtle poisoning into the minds and hearts of the American people at a time when this nation is in a death grapple to perpetuate the principles upon which the nation is founded, is the height of unwisdom and folly.

"Steffen's revolutionary and anarchistic statements in San Diego as they appear in the public press, though obscure in the deceptive paint and raiment of the harlot, are nevertheless in substance propaganda of the most insidious and dangerous character.

"The exigencies of this wartime require that Lincoln Steffens and all such conscientious but misguided romancers should be quickly and effectively muzzled for the duration of the war."

* * * * *

January 3, 1922

LOS ANGELES EVENING EXPRESS

L.A. Police Head Wants To Be Put On Retired List

"The job is not worth it."

Such was the statement made by Charles A. Jones, chief of police, today after he announced he will appear later in the day before the mayor and pension board and ask to retire.

This announcement follows the circulation of many rumors for last three months that the chief intended to retire. Political wrangling both inside the police department and at the City hall followed his appointment by Mayor Cryer after the latter's election. Rumors about the central station are that either Capt. R. Lee Heath or Police Commissioner De Coo will be named to succeed Jones.

Chief Jones, following the announcement of his proposed retirement issued a burning statement in which he said:

"No one man can run the Los Angeles police department. There are too many meddlesome so-called reformers and others who interfere with the work of the officers.

"They insist that the police department devote its entire efforts to running petty gamblers out of business instead of devoting itself to the more important work of protecting the lives and property of our citizens and the visitors in our midst.

"Not only that, but within the department itself, among the men and officers, there is too much bickering and conniving to `get' each other's jobs.

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Note. The following clipping appeared in an early issue of TAYLOROLOGY, however, it is worth reprinting with respect to the topic under consideration.

* * * * *

February 21, 1922

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The Taylor Case in Los Angeles Shows Incompetency of Police.

The search--if one can call it a search--being made for the slayer of Motion Picture Director Taylor in Los Angeles is getting on the nerves of everybody, and the police should either produce the killer or turn the job of hunting for him over to competent persons. It seems as if every one who knew Taylor or could in any fashion be connected with the case has been interrogated at least a half dozen times. The police and the fame-seeking District Attorney of the California metropolis apparently have questioned persons who had no more to do with Taylor's murder than the residents of the Canary Islands. One Woolwine, District Attorney, made what he called an

independent investigation, with a camera-man tagging him around and reporters in his following. Woolwine posed in the Taylor house with an assistant taking the part of the picture director--this being done to "reconstruct the crime." How would that help find the criminal? In their efforts the police and the Woolwine force have sent several reputable actresses into retirement, suffering from nervous prostration, and have cast some slight suspicion on a few persons who could not possibly kill another. The time has come for these Los Angeles sleuths and Woolwine and his actors to get off the job, and devote their time to whatever business may be at hand. Skilled detectives should take over the case and follow it to the end. Motion picture makers of Hollywood have raised a fund to hunt down Taylor's slayer, and they can put it to good use by dealing with a reputable detective agency and ignoring the incompetents of the police force and the District Attorney of Los Angeles.

* * * * *

May 20, 1922
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Commission Weighing Case of Miss Jones

The Civil Service Commission yesterday took under consideration the letter from Dist.-Atty. Woolwine giving his reasons for dismissing Miss Ida Wright Jones from his employ.

The commissioners would not indicate what if any action would be taken in the matter. The commission would either have to approve or disapprove of Mr. Woolwine's action in dismissing Miss Jones, which was based on the report that she was preparing to sell an affidavit to his political enemies for \$10,00 to the effect that she had been intimate with him.

Miss Jones has not petitioned for a hearing looking to her reinstatement. She was not represented at the meeting of the commissioners yesterday.

* * * * *

January 6, 1923
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Woolwine Gets Film Job Offer

Resignation of Thomas Lee Woolwine as District Attorney within the next few days to become the executive head of a motion-picture organization to be known as the Independent Producing Manager's Association, loomed as a strong possibility last night with the announcement by Herman I. Roth, Hollywood attorney, and nationally known throughout theatrical circles, that overtures made to Mr. Woolwine during the last ten days practically had been accepted.

"I am not in a position to say whether I am going to resign to take the film job or not," Mr. Woolwine stated last night. "Things relative to the film position are shaping up rather well but before I will know anything definite I am going to have an other conference with the heads of the undertaking.

"There is a possibility that I may take it. We have been figuring on the proposition for days and have been going into it rather thoroughly.

"Whether I accept the position or not depends on the outcome of the next conference I am going to have which will be on Monday night. Then I shall know definitely.

"The way I understand matters at present I will be expected to handle the legal end of the company. I am going into the matter more thoroughly at the next conference to learn what will be expected of me."

Acceptance of this offer by Mr. Woolwine will mean, it is said, a salary of approximately \$25,000 yearly for a period of five years.

The association which was suggested voluntarily by a number of independent producers for the purpose of exploiting their own pictures, efficiency and economy to be the watchword, was fostered and brought to a head through the work of Mr. Roth. Twelve independent producers have already have pledged themselves to such an association and three more companies possibly will be allied with the original set in a few days. Ultimately every independent producer will be linked into the association, it is said.

Mr. Woolwine if he accepts, will not become in any sense the Will Hays of the independent producers, but will look after the financial affairs of

the proposed association in an advisory capacity, most of the legal work being left to Mr. Roth.

The independents are not seeking to rival or oppose other organizations already formed in the motion picture field, but seek co-operation between independents for economy and efficiency, and to the end that their pictures get fair break with those of the larger organizations, which, through their power, have better distributing facilities.

* * * * *

IT IS STATED IN THE ABOVE CLIPPING THAT WOOLWINE WAS WANTED TO BRING FINANCIAL EFFICIENCY TO THE ORGANIZATION OF INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS. LOOK AT THE FOLLOWING AND JUDGE FOR ONESELF WHETHER SUCH CONFIDENCE WAS JUSTIFIED:

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from; A STUDY OF THE OFFICE AND PROBLEMS OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY, by Daniel Beecher, Chief Trial Deputy District Attorney, formerly Judge of Superior Court (1931)

* Operating Costs of District Attorney's Office--Los Angeles County

BIENNIAL PERIOD	OFFICE EXPENDITURES (2 FISCAL YEARS)	NUMBER OF FELONY CONVICTIONS (2 FISCAL YEARS)	COST PER FELONY CONVICTION
1920-22 (Woolwine)	\$401,890.08	1,665	\$242.83
1922-24 (Woolwine) to June 6, 1924 (thereafter Keyes)	\$596,213.66	2,759	\$230.78
1924-26 (Keyes)	\$802,343.76	2,904	\$276.25
1926-28 (Keyes to Dec. 3, 1928; thereafter Burton Fitts)	\$1,083,070.47	4,775	\$226.80

	OFFICE EXPENDITURES	NUMBER OF FELONY CONVICTIONS	COST PER FELONY CONVICTION
1929-30 (Fitts)	\$555,349.61	2,766	\$200.77
1930-31 (Fitts)	\$590,508.99	3,195	\$184.82

* Felony Convictions In Los Angeles County Based Upon Population

FISCAL YEAR	POPULATION OF L.A. CTY.	NO. OF FELONY CONVICTIONS	NO. OF FELONY CONVICTIONS PER 100,000 POPULATION
1920-21 (Woolwine)	1,086,408	827	71
1921-22 (Woolwine)	1,255,353	828	71
1922-23 (Woolwine to June 6, '23 then Keyes)	1,378,685	1,289	90
1923-24 (Keyes)	1,509,318	1,290	90
(Keyes)	1,864,733	1,452	78
1925-26 (Keyes)	1,933,675	1,452	78
1926-27 (Keyes)	1,996,507	1,798	88
1927-28 (Keyes)	2,074,812	1,799	88
1928-29 (Keyes to Dec. 3, '28 then Fitts)	2,196,195	2,009	91
1929-30			

(Fitts)	2,202,510	2,766	125
1930-31			
(Fitts)	2,240,208	3,195	142

* * * * *

March 21, 1925
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Woolwine Suit Is Thrown Out

Holding the communications objected to were privileged and that evidence submitted was insufficient to constitute a cause of action, Judge York of Superior-Court yesterday granted a motion dismissing the suit for \$75,000 damages brought by Ida Wright Jones against Thomas Lee Woolwine, former District Attorney, and others, for asserted defamation of character.

Judge York threw the case out of court after hearing arguments Thursday afternoon on the motion for a nonsuit, which was offered by W. J. Ford, attorney for Woolwine, and Will Anderson counsel for the other defendants.

Miss Jones's complaint was based on stories published relative to her dismissal from the District Attorney's office by Woolwine in May, 1922. She declared her reputation had been injured by Woolwine, who wrote a letter to the Civil Service Commission stating he had discharged Miss Jones because information had come to him that she was planning to make an affidavit stating she had been intimate with Woolwine and sell it to his political enemies for \$10,000. On the witness stand Miss Jones denied she had ever planned to make such an affidavit or dispose of such information to his opponents.

Woolwine, who is convalescing from a serious illness that befell him in Europe more than a year ago, was not in court during the trial, as his physicians ordered he be secluded from his attorney.

* * * * *

June 6, 1923
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Judge Scores Prosecutor

Judge Monroe in Superior Court yesterday in dismissing a criminal action against Capt. Jose Fonseca, formerly an aviator in the Mexican army, bitterly arraigned the District Attorney's office for inefficiency and "for cluttering up the courts."

The court "bolted over" when the prosecutor arose and moved that the case against Fonseca be dismissed because of insufficient evidence.

In dismissing the case, Judge Monroe declared that the suspect had been in jail for three or four months because of the loose method employed by the District Attorney and his assistants. The District Attorney's office knew, he declared, that there was insufficient evidence to convict the prisoner when the latter had his preliminary hearing yet he was kept in jail and finally dragged into Superior Court, where already the docket is overcrowded.

Judge Monroe declared further that the tactics of the District Attorney's office were hampering the efforts of the courts to dispense justice and were aggravating the congestion in the County Jail.

Fonseca was charged with the theft of an automobile from a local concern. He contended that he had rented the automobile and told the officials of the concern from whom it was rented that he would not return it for some time. He stated further that the company told him he could use the machine as he wished if he paid the rent for it.

Fonseca drove the machine to Fresno, where he was arrested and brought back here. He was given a preliminary hearing and then held to answer to the higher court.

* * * * *

July 9, 1925

LOS ANGELES TIMES

(from Woolwine's obituary)

From the date of his acceptance of the office, Dist.-Atty. Woolwine was constantly in the limelight of publicity. If he was not being attacked, he was assailing somebody else. One of the first attacks launched against him

was one by an organization known as the Law Enforcement League. The league endeavored to have Dist.-Atty. Woolwine removed from office on charges of "failure to do his duty," but he was exonerated in 1916 amidst a scene of flying fists when his attorney, W. J. Ford, struck the opposing counsel twice on the chin.

NEXT ISSUE: The Return of Ellery Queen and Erle Stanley Gardner

Allegations that Henry Peavey Murdered Taylor

When did Mary Miles Minter Learn of Taylor's Death?

Flashes of Margaret Shelby

Wallace Smith: February 11, 1922

NOTES by Bruce Long:

[1] Taylor was born in 1872 (not 1877); he was the second (not third) child; he had no sister named Grace. See chapter four of A DEED OF DEATH for some specific details on Taylor's life prior to his marriage.

[2] On the contrary, there is considerable definite data for Taylor's movements and activity between 1908 (when he left his wife) and 1912 (when he obtained his first acting job in the movies).

[3] Denis and Ada Deane-Tanner had three children (not two). One died in infancy.

[4] Although Taylor was one of Famous Players-Lasky's most prominent directors, he certainly was not "the leading director"--that title clearly belonged to Cecil B. DeMille.

[5] This is only a rumor; some deny that Taylor was a womanizer. (In fact, some deny that Taylor had any real interest in women at all. See A CAST OF KILLERS.)

[6] Taylor was released from military active duty in spring (not summer) 1919. He was back in Hollywood in mid-May. (See WDT: DOSSIER, p. 92)

[7] Sands (as Edward F. Strathmore) had been in the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Army. He was not in the British Army.

[8] Although Sands was a prominent suspect in Taylor's murder, there was no

indication that he had blackmailed Taylor.

[9] Sands was seen several times after leaving Taylor's employment. He was positively identified in Fresno and Sacramento as having pawned some of the jewelry stolen from Taylor in a subsequent burglary. He was seen downtown Los Angeles at 1:20 p.m. the day before the murder, and was reportedly seen several other times.

[10] Mary Miles Minter was certainly never "the most popular actress on the screen." In a poll in Motion Picture Magazine shortly before the murder, she was not even in the top ten. (The top three were Norma Talmadge, Gloria Swanson, Mary Pickford.)

[11] It was never firmly established that Minter owned the "lingerie" found in Taylor's apartment.

[12] None of Minter's films were "shot out to the exhibitors as quickly as possible" after the Taylor murder. "Tillie" was released on January 29--prior to the murder--and her next film, "The Heart Specialist," was released on April 9, more than two months after the murder. Her other 1922 films were released in July and October.

[13] The crest of Mabel Normand's popularity had passed several years earlier. In the "comedienne" category of the popularity poll mentioned above, she was third, behind Dorothy Gish and Constance Talmadge.

[14] Mabel Normand's injury resulting from her 1915 confrontation with Mack Sennett did make front page banner headlines (see LOS ANGELES HERALD, September 20, 1915), but the incident was covered up to make it appear that she had been injured during an accident at the film studio.

[15] The MacLean's cottage was not the last one on the right; it was at right angles to Taylor's, facing Alvarado.

[16] Some contemporary press items do state that Peavey had been bailed out that morning, but other reports indicated it was several days earlier. (See VARIETY, February 10, 1922)

[17] It was thought that Taylor had died of a stomach hemorrhage, not heart disease. The bullet wound was in his left side, slightly toward the back.

[18] Faith MacLean did not testify at the inquest. Elsewhere, she stated that

she was looking out her front door (not the upstairs veranda) when she saw the man. She did not see him "come out" of Taylor's apartment; he was already standing outside, but Taylor's door was open. (See WDT: DOSSIER, pp. 333-335.)

[19] Edna Purviance did not telephone Mary Miles Minter and notify her of Taylor's death; Mary was notified by her mother, Charlotte Shelby.

[20] Mary always denied that any of her lingerie was in Taylor's possession, or even that she had any monogrammed lingerie. There was a nightgown found among Taylor's effects, with differing reports as to whether it was or was not monogrammed. (See WDT: DOSSIER, p. 369.) Minter did admit that she gave Taylor monogrammed handkerchiefs, which were found among his effects. The "monogrammed lingerie" is only an unverified rumor. The 1922 press reports did not explicitly state that the rumored initials were "MMM"; the initials were only implied. This recap by Sutherland was one of the first to explicitly state so.

Sutherland's recap became the foundation for many later recaps of the Taylor case.

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.uno.edu/~drif/arbuckle/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>

For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 17 -- May 1994 Editor: Bruce Long *
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What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

The Return of Ellery Queen and Erle Stanley Gardner

Old recaps of the Taylor murder case written by two famous mystery writers have recently been reprinted in "true crime" anthologies. Erle Stanley Gardner (creator of Perry Mason) wrote "The Case of the Movie Murder" in 1946, and it has been reprinted in MURDER PLUS: TRUE CRIME STORIES FROM THE MASTERS OF DETECTIVE FICTION, edited by Marc Gerald, and again in STILL UNSOLVED: GREAT

TRUE MURDER CASES, edited by Richard Glyn Jones. Jones also edited THE MAMMOTH BOOK OF MURDER, reprinting the 1952 article "Hollywood's Most Baffling Murder" by Ellery Queen (originally published under the title "The Taylor Case: The Murder Hollywood Can't Forget"). Of the two recaps, the one by Erle Stanley Gardner is much better--his main source material appears to have been the newspaper morgue file of the LOS ANGELES EXAMINER, whereas Ellery Queen seems to have relied primarily on Sutherland's 1929 LIBERTY article.

Allegations that Henry Peavey Murdered Taylor

Many people within Taylor's range of contact came under suspicion in the Taylor murder. The following clippings contain allegations which were made against Taylor's servant, Henry Peavey.

* * * * *

March 29, 1923

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Albert Fields, a young negro held in the County Jail on a charge of stealing automobiles, says Henry Peavey, Taylor's colored valet, admitted that he (Peavey) shot the director...

Albert Fields said yesterday that he had known Peavey for several years and renewed his acquaintance last May when Peavey returned to San Francisco and took his old job of cleaning out a pool hall. Shorn of his grandeur as the body servant of the great director, Peavey made the most of the notoriety which had enmeshed him. Fields says when he asked Peavey who killed Taylor the former valet let his eyelids droop and changed the conversation.

So Fields set out on a campaign to clear up the mystery. One fell day, says Fields, Peavey admitted that he had slain the director, and had slain him for a price. This is the way Fields says Peavey says he did it:

After serving a drink to Mr. Taylor and Miss Mabel Normand, who was the last person besides the murderer to see Mr. Taylor alive, Peavey made much of departing leaving the back door unlocked. He talked to Miss Normand's

chauffeur, then hid in the dark. When the director and Miss Normand walked to the car Peavey slipped into the house and shot Taylor as he entered. Then he crept from the house.

In a few days he collected what was owing to him in blood money, stayed around town to satisfy the suspicions of the detectives and then went to San Francisco and nailed the pool hall job.

Last July, through some breach of the King's peace, Fields found himself in the City Jail at San Francisco. He got the ear of Captain of Detectives Matheson and played his trump card. The police went down to Peavey's pool hall and dragged him before Fields, where accusations were hurled back and forth. Both of them were kept in jail for a few days and then put out.

In December Detective Lieuts. Raymond Hickok and Erven went to Tiajuana and arrested Fields. They said he had stolen many motor cars and run them across the international line. When Fields found himself in jail he brushed off his soiled ace and played it again. Deputy Dist.-Atty. Fricke heard him out. So did Detective Lieut. King. Mr. King had worked on the Taylor case last year, and decided that Peavey was having a bit of fun at Field's expense. [sic] That ended the Peavey investigation until the sudden rain of confessions yesterday revived it.

* * * * *

October 16, 1925

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

Indications that the reopened investigation into the murder of William Desmond Taylor, more than three years ago, had centered upon Henry Peavey, the motion picture director's negro valet, were given yesterday when District Attorney Asa W. Keyes of Los Angeles conferred here with a San Francisco detective.

Detective Jack Cannon of the police automobile detail went to the Hotel St. Francis yesterday at Keyes' summons and was requested by the Los Angeles official to "stand ready to help out."

It was learned for the first time yesterday that Cannon a year ago made a special trip to Los Angeles to furnish the authorities there with a purported

confession from Peavey that he had murdered Taylor.

This confession was said to have been made to another negro, Miles Proctor, with whom he lived in a San Francisco rooming house. Proctor was taken into custody on a different charge and bared to Cannon what he said was a complete story of the Taylor murder told to him by Peavey.

According to Proctor, Peavey said he was retained by an Eastern capitalist to do away with Taylor and successfully negotiated the crime after worming his way into the motion picture director's employ. He said the capitalist was still sending him periodic payments. [1]

Cannon rushed to Los Angeles with this information and at the behest of the southern investigators a watch was maintained at the San Francisco post office on Peavey's mail for nearly two weeks, but no letters were received here, it became known yesterday.

Meanwhile Peavey went to Missouri, where he is now believed to be living.

When did Mary Miles Minter learn of Taylor's Death?

(An Analysis of Statements Attributed to Margaret Shelby Fillmore
Regarding February 1, 1922)

Unfortunately we have no verbatim transcripts yet available of Margaret Shelby's statements concerning the events which occurred on the day of the Taylor murder. However, we do have three reported versions of her statements, with interesting variations:

1. Leroy Sanderson's official letter, dated June 13, 1941, includes a summary of the detailed transcribed statement made by Margaret to the Los Angeles authorities on May 5, 1937 (the day prior to her appearance before the Grand Jury). According to Sanderson's written summary: "She stated in substance, that on the night of February 1, 1922, Mary had been locked in her room by her mother, because Mrs. Shelby feared that Mary was going to run away with Taylor. That Mary left the house early in the evening, exact

time unknown, and returned about 8:30 p.m. That she was nervous and upset and was crying. That later on that evening, although Mary and she were very bad friends, Mary came to her room and asked to remain there, stating that she was lonesome and didn't wish to be alone." [2]

2. A few months later, Margaret took the witness stand in the lawsuit Fillmore vs. Shelby, and the LOS ANGELES TIMES reported she gave the following testimony on August 23, 1937:

Questioned concerning the whereabouts of Mrs. Shelby and Mary Miles Minter on the night of the Taylor murder, Mrs. Fillmore said:

"Mary came in about 9 p.m. in a very hysterical manner. She picked up a book and began reading about the South Sea Islands.

"The book seemed to amuse her, but I picked it up later and found it dry and uninteresting.

"Mrs. Shelby was not at home that day. I knew she was out all day and night hunting certain men to locate Mary." [3]

3. In A CAST OF KILLERS, Kirkpatrick said that Vidor said that Sanderson said that Margaret said: Mrs. Shelby locked Mary in her room, but grandmother Julia let Mary out and Mary departed; Shelby went to the basement and got a muffler, long coat and gun, then Shelby left; an hour later Mary returned hysterical, got into bed with Margaret and told her the following had happened: Mary was upstairs in Taylor's apartment during Mabel Normand's final visit; while Taylor was escorting Mabel back to her car, Mary came down the stairs and found Shelby there; when Taylor walked back into the apartment, Shelby shot and killed him in Mary's presence. [4]

It is reasonable to assume that the Sanderson letter and the reported testimony on the witness stand are essentially accurate representations of what Margaret stated. But it is very difficult to believe what Kirkpatrick writes, and that Margaret actually related these events purportedly told to her by Mary on the night of the murder--difficult to believe that Mary was

upstairs during Mabel's visit, difficult to believe that Mary witnessed Taylor's murder and then told Margaret about it. As to whether Mary was upstairs during Mabel's visit with Taylor, strong arguments against that position have been presented elsewhere. [5]

As to whether Mary witnessed Taylor's murder, Margaret testified on the witness stand that Mary, after returning home that evening, was reading a book and was visibly amused by it. (The book, identified in Minter's official 1922 statement as THE CRUISE OF THE KAWA, was a very funny book--Margaret's opinion to the contrary notwithstanding.) If Mary had indeed just witnessed Taylor's murder it is hard to believe that she would be amused shortly afterwards, then burst into extreme hysterics when "notified" of Taylor's death the following morning. Her affection for Taylor was clearly genuine and endured through the years; her anguish the following morning was also clearly genuine. If she was amused an hour or so after Taylor's death, then she knew absolutely nothing about the murder at that time.

As to whether the tale told by Kirkpatrick was actually related by Margaret to the investigators, the strongest evidence to the contrary is Sanderson's 1941 letter. If Margaret had actually made a statement indicating Mary witnessed Taylor's shooting by Shelby, why was it not mentioned in Sanderson's letter? That statement would have been very compelling evidence for the case Sanderson was trying to present against Shelby. (Margaret died in 1939, so she did not make another statement after Sanderson wrote his letter.) This silence of omission is very strong indication against the veracity of Kirkpatrick's account. In addition, Sanderson suggests that perhaps Stockdale or Kirkwood committed the murder (on Shelby's behalf)--why would he make this suggestion if indeed he had been told that Mary personally witnessed Shelby shooting Taylor? It makes no sense. Given the large number of errors in A CAST OF KILLERS [6] this entire tale appears to be just another inaccuracy, constructed to support the main premise of Kirkpatrick's book.

However, if we only accept the Sanderson letter and Margaret's reported

testimony in Fillmore vs. Shelby, we still have a major contradiction. In Sanderson's letter, Margaret stated that Mary was locked in her room by Shelby all day, only escaping in early evening; in Margaret's lawsuit testimony, "Mrs. Shelby was not at home that day. I knew she was out all day and night hunting certain men to locate Mary." This contradiction suggests that Margaret was not telling the complete truth (both statements could not be true), and increases the possibility that other portions of her statements may also be untrue, motivated by revenge against Shelby for having betrayed her (for having had her committed to the mental hospital, for having taken her money and property, etc.).

Finally, there are the contradictions about Mary's mental state. Margaret's testimony on the witness stand indicated that Mary entered "in a very hysterical manner" but she soon was amused by a book she was reading. Margaret's statement summarized by Sanderson indicated that Mary "was nervous and upset and was crying" when she entered. If indeed she was crying, her tears evidently didn't last long and her so-called "hysteria" of that evening was very small compared to her genuine hysteria the following day when notified of Taylor's death.

Conclusion: In her public statements, Mary always insisted that she knew nothing of Taylor's death until she was notified by Charlotte Shelby on the morning of February 2. Pending more substantial evidence to the contrary (and considering Mary's later reconciliation with Shelby), it is reasonable to conclude that Mary was telling the truth--she was not present when Taylor was killed and knew nothing about his death until the following morning.

Flashes of Margaret Shelby

* * * * *

May 7, 1921
Mary Miles Minter

...In our house on Cadiz Street, Dallas, Texas, where we had been living it had been the custom for a long time for my sister Margaret and me to play out little parts with mother coaching us. In that way we learned, unconsciously, the fine points of stage technique, which kept us from appearing awkward in the unfamiliar atmosphere behind the front curtain.

...Before I forget it--let me tell how it was that [as a small child] I got my part in "Cameo Kirby." It's really funny and mother and I have laughed over the incident many times. We had come up from Dallas to New York, and one day a friend told mother that a little girl was to be engaged for "Cameo Kirby," so down to the theatre we went.

Margaret, my sister, had been successful in other child roles, and it was she who was to be the applicant for the part. I was just taken along as there was no one to leave me with.

Margaret, however, did not prove to be just the type and Mr. Arnold Daly went slowly down the row of sixty-five children--while I stood over in one corner.

They told me to be quiet--but all of a sudden I cried out, "Oh, mamma, see what a funny face that man has!"

Mr. Daly whirled--and instead of annihilating me with a glance walked right over to my corner and said, "This is the little girl I want." Then mother told him I had never acted. But I was given the part.

* * * * *

March 1912

THE THEATRE

(from an interview with Juliet Shelby [Mary Miles Minter])...Oh, yes, I like being an actress. My sister Margaret is an actress. She's blacker, I mean she's a brunette. She has black eyes and dark hair, and she's two years older than me. I wish they would take Margaret into the company, and let her play 'The Littlest Rebel' one night, or one week, and me play it the next. Then sister and I could always be together, and play as much as we like--play keep house, I mean.

...My days are just like any other little girl's. I go from here with
mamma--that's what I call my grandma. My mother is with my sister--they've
been playing in an awful failure...

* * * * *

March 19, 1916

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

(from an interview with Mary Miles Minter)... "I can manage my sister
Margaret quite easily, and she's sixteen, but there's never any reason for
demonstrating that fact. We are very different, but I don't believe we've ever
had a serious quarrel, only sometimes at night, when I want the light left on
to read by, and she wants it off so that she can sleep, we keep popping it on
and off for hours.

"...It is hard to find a play that suits the sort of acting I can do
best, and want to do...Margaret is cut out for comedy, but I prefer drama, but
not of the gush and sentimental kind."

* * * * *

May 1916

MOTION PICTURE MAGAZINE

...Margaret, this older sister, is also very ambitious, and has just
closed a busy season with Nazimova's wonderful vaudeville sketch, "War
Brides," and hopes to be installed soon in the same field as her sister.

* * * * *

August 20, 1916

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Margaret Shelby, sister of Mary Miles Minter, of the American Company,
has recently become a member of Oliver Morosco's Burbank Theatre Stock
Company. Her first appearance was in Grace Livingston Furniss's play, "The
Fibber."

* * * * *

September 17, 1916

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Margaret Shelby and Mary Miles Minter, sisters, are playing together for

the first time in Director James Kirkwood's picture, "Faith," now in the course of production at the Santa Barbara studios.

* * * * *

February 1917

PHOTOPLAY

Mary Miles Minter had a narrow escape from death in an automobile accident early in December while en route in her automobile from Los Angeles to Santa Barbara. She sustained injuries which are keeping her on the hospital list but she got off much more lucky than her mother and sister, Margaret Shelby. Mrs. Gertrude [sic] Shelby, the mother of the girls was driving when the car skidded and turned over in the ditch. Mrs. Shelby sustained a broken arm, her sister was badly cut and bruised and Miss Minter suffered severe cuts from broken glass.

* * * * *

March 26, 1920

LOS ANGELES HERALD

Last evening, amidst a froth of mirth and a pall of sombre tragedy, the Amateur Players came into their own once more. The Little Theater had in its audience about 300 of Los Angeles' exclusives, while a cast of especially clever folk moved them to laughter, or startled them to tears. Mrs. Tyler Henshaw and Max Pollock directed the three playlets most successfully.

...The lovely film star, Mary Miles Minter, played the lead in the clever little comedy, "Entre Act."

The setting is back stage at an amateur performance, with beautiful Miss Minter in the proverbial Juliet costume, clever Fred McPherson playing the almost unfaithful Romeo, while a wicked and alluring little vamp in the person of Margaret Shelby, sister of Miss Minter, handled with much piquancy the tempting Carmen. The second offering this season of the Amateur Players finished in delightful style with a dance and hot supper on the stage, the audience meeting the actors face to face.

* * * * *

August 28, 1920

LOS ANGELES HERALD

Many have been the stories of men and women giving up business careers for the make-believe life of the motion picture studios, but today the situation was reversed when Margaret Shelby discarded make-up appliances for a life as a business woman.

Miss Shelby is the sister of Mary Miles Minter and is herself almost as well known on the screen. She announced she is quitting for all time her motion picture work to enter the real estate field.

The retiring picture star will conduct her business under the firm name of Margaret Shelby Investment Co., and has made her first move as a real estate dealer by opening up a 30-acre tract. [7]

"The business world always has interested me," Miss Shelby stated, "and I am pinning my hopes of success on Los Angeles real estate.

"My only connection with the motion pictures will be through my younger sister, Mary."

* * * * *

October 1920

PHOTOPLAY

"I am proud of that little sister of mine," says Margaret Shelby, sister of Mary Miles Minter. "I cannot tell you how proud I am, and besides that would sound egotistical; but I can say from the bottom of my heart that being sister to a celebrity is not exactly a bed of roses...Mary's beaux smother me with flowers and deluge me with candies. I am showered with invitations to lovely dinner parties 'a deux' with the usual pink lights, soft music, etc., ad lib. Then 'He' gazes longingly into my melting orbs and whispers, 'How is Mary? Tell me about her?'

"I even dream of a future as the sympathetic wife of one of Mary's erstwhile beaux."

* * * * *

May 1921

MOTION PICTURE MAGAZINE

(from an interview with Mary Miles Minter)..."To hear her [Charlotte

Shelby] and Margaret talk you'd think they didn't have any souls. They love to tease me."

* * * * *

June 25, 1921

Billie Blenton

MOVIE WEEKLY

Her sister, Margaret Shelby, was telling me about Mary's distracting way of making trains. At least she said it was distracting. Personally, I thought it corking. Mary has a habit of arriving at the station two minutes before the train pulls out and calmly wanting to know if she is late!

"The worst of it, Mary had a life-sized doll that looked like a real baby in its dainty garments. Every time it was bent over, it piped: 'mama.' A young man, a great friend of mine, came to see me off. We rode down in the elevator together. What do you suppose that crazy doll did? It slipped out of my grasp, drooped forward, and piped: 'mama.' Of course, everybody in the elevator looked at us and smiled. The young man turned scarlet. The doll piped up 'mama' again in the lobby, and--

"Well, we finally did get to the station, doll and all. At the ninth hour Mary turned up, just as calm and cheery as you please."

* * * * *

April 4, 1923

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Residential suites de luxe is the name to be given to the palatial apartments which Mrs. Charlotte Shelby and Miss Margaret Shelby, mother and sister of Mary Miles Minter, have evolved out of the old Duque residence at 701 South New Hampshire street.

This magnificent old colonial home with its forty rooms has been transformed into ten suites, each furnished in some unique period furniture scheme. The house itself has been christened Casa de la Marguerita and is to have its own name.

* * * * *

August 10, 1923

Emphatic denial of the charges made by Mary Miles Minter, famous motion picture actress, that her mother and sister had refused to account for the salary earned by her on the silver sheet, was voiced today by Miss Margaret Shelby, sister of the beautiful star.

"Mother never refused to render an accounting to Mary of the salary which she earned as a motion picture actress," Miss Shelby declared today.

"I am too dumbfounded to know just what reply to make to the charges. It is a grievous surprise to me and it's hard to say how it will affect mother.

"Mother never has refused a settlement with Mary. To begin with, money was never discussed in our home. We had the happiest home imaginable. My mother has done what she thought was best for Mary and myself. It is bewildering to us why Mary has taken this stand.

"It is unfortunate that Mary should make these charges just now when mother is so ill. Her constant plea is for Mary. We both love her dearly and no matter what Mary says, it will not change our attitude towards her. She can come home at any time and be received with open arms."

Concerning the condition of her mother, Miss Shelby said she was "painfully ill and under the care of two special nurses."

When further questioned as to the doctor's statements concerning the outcome of the operation which Mrs. Shelby underwent, Miss Shelby replied.

"The doctors have not told me that mother is near death. You know they tell one so little. We intended to bring mother home on Wednesday, but she is suffering so terribly that she cannot be moved. My grandmother and myself cannot bear to stay in the room more than a few minutes at the time and witness her anguish.

"But regardless of her suffering, mother's sole thought is for Mary. She calls for her and is willing to forget and forgive everything if Mary will only come. Mary has been the very heart throb of mother's existence for years.

"No matter what Mary has to say, mother will be glad to see her," was the statement issued from the mother through Margaret Shelby, Miss Minter's older sister.

* * * * *

August 11, 1923

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

...Her mother, Mrs. Shelby, who has been painfully ill at the Good Samaritan Hospital, following an operation, yesterday refused to be interviewed, but her daughter, Margaret, entered an emphatic denial to the statements of Miss Minter.

"Mary will not always feel as she does at present," said the elder sister of the beautiful young star. "The time will come when she will realize that everything mother has done has been for her best interests.

"Why, mother has often begged Mary to take the money that rightfully belonged to her. In fact, my mother has always worshipped Mary and has acted only for her best interests.

"Personally, I am in no way involved in the matter. This financial affair is entirely between my mother and Mary. I have never received one cent of the money my sister has received."

But it is a different story that Mary tells regarding the handling of the family funds.

"My sister started in the real estate business on money earned by me," she declared in answer to Margaret's statements. "Anything that Margaret wanted was all right, but I cannot even sell the automobile in which I drove away from the home which was purchased and kept up with my earnings."

* * * * *

August 13, 1923

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, Mary Miles Minter's mother, who was brought home from the hospital Saturday, was reported yesterday as much improved.

"She is still in a very weakened condition, and her vitality is extremely low, but she was so glad to get home that I am sure it will make her feel better," declared Margaret Shelby, Mary's older sister, yesterday.

"We have tried to keep mother from knowing that so much was being published about this trouble, but it's terribly hard, as she insists on having

the papers brought to her, and it almost kills her to read the terrible things that have been said.

"Why, I love my sister and would do anything for her, and, after all, you know, 'blood is thicker than water.' I have saved every letter that Mary ever wrote me--I even have one that was written when she was five years old.

"I am sure it's not so that I have been using Mary's money. What little I have I have made myself in the real estate business.

Margaret then told how she got her start in the real estate business in Los Angeles.

"And I have done it all myself. I bought one little piece of property when I first came and sold it at a profit, and then I bought another piece, and now I am interested in a wonderful tract," and she showed the reporter a bird's eye sketch of the property.

"Are all those pretty houses in the sketch on the property now?" asked the reporter.

"Mercy, no! Why, if I had the money to build them I could make lots of money."

* * * * *

March 16, 1927

Dorothy Herzog

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

...A curious thing happened during Mary's last trip West [in 1925]. Her sister, Margaret, was engaged to be married. Mary knew she was engaged. She had heard so from an outside source. But Margaret never breathed a word of it to Miss Minter.

Margaret never invited her sister to the wedding, which occurred while Mary was living under the same roof.

Then, one evening Mary, motivated by a warm impulse, took a diamond breastpin--one of the few pieces of jewelry she had left, and which Margaret had often admired--raced downstairs and knocked on Margaret's bedroom door. Margaret opened it, and seeing her sister, came out into the corridor.

Whereupon Mary handed her the diamond barpin, told her they had not

always been the friends she often desired, wished her happiness and turned to leave. Margaret had the grace to cry and Mary took her in her arms and said, "You mustn't do that."

At this moment, Mrs. Shelby, having heard voices in the hall, opened her door and saw the two together.

"Very touching, very pretty indeed," she commented sarcastically. Margaret jerked away from Mary and thenceforth treated her with cold aloofness as of yore. But she kept the diamond breastpin.

* * * * *

June 3, 1936

LOS ANGELES TIMES

The ghost of tragedy which has stalked in the wake of Mary Miles Minter's money beckoned at another victim yesterday.

The attractive Mrs. Margaret Fillmore, Mary's sister, is seriously ill and is in a sanitarium under the constant care of a physician.

Coming as a complete surprise, that was the announcement made in Superior Judge Emmet Wilson's court yesterday by Attorney Joseph Lewinson, who is representing Mary, Mrs. Fillmore and Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, their mother, in a civil suit to recover what they say was a large part of Mary's once fabulous film fortune.

"Mrs. Fillmore has suffered a complete nervous breakdown and will not be able to attend court or to be a witness here," said Lewinson, when the question of the non-appearance was brought sharply to the front by Norman Sterry, attorney representing Blyth & Co., investment bankers, who are defendants in the Minter suit.

* * * * *

March 20, 1937

LOS ANGELES HERALD-EXPRESS

Emmett J. Flynn, film director, and his bride of three days, the former Margaret Shelby Fillmore, 36-year-old sister of Mary Miles Minter, today arranged to appear in police court at Glendale on Monday on a charge of being drunk in an automobile. Following a dispute over payment of a \$25 bill for

their taxicab elopement to Yuma, Flynn and his wife were arrested at the Grand Central airport last night and spent several hours in jail until released on bail. Don Rhodes, taxicab driver, who said he drove Flynn and his bride-to-be to Yuma last Wednesday, and asserted that he failed to receive his \$25 fee after the ceremony, caused the arrests.

Flynn and his bride, leaving their hotel at 1043 West Sixth street, went to the airport late yesterday to claim Flynn's automobile. They encountered Rhodes, who demanded the \$25. He called police when the Flynnns started to drive away in the car. The Flynnns were arrested shortly afterward.

Mrs. Flynn, fondling her Pekinese pup as she talked in a cell of the women's division of the Glendale jail, last night said:

"Mr. Flynn hired the man (Rhodes) to drive us to Yuma after we had started out in an airplane and had to come back to the airport because of bad weather. He paid \$50 for hire of the car, and he paid the hotel bill for Rhodes and his wife in Yuma. After our marriage, we decided to come back by train."

Rhodes said he was promised \$25 in addition to the \$50 paid him.

Hollywood was puzzled by the Flynn-Fillmore marriage. An "Emmett J. Flynn," said to be a motion picture director, was charged with desertion and non-support last Feb. 25 in a separate maintenance suit filed by Mrs. Nita Flynn. The suit stated they were married in Florida in December, 1933.

* * * * *

April 3, 1937

LOS ANGELES HERALD-EXPRESS

Emmett Flynn, one-time ace film director, today whistled happily as he wielded a broom in Beverly Hills jail, where he is serving a 30-day sentence for probation violation.

Just why he whistled, Beverly jail authorities weren't quite sure unless of course, it signified a reconciliation with his bride of less than two weeks, Mrs. Margaret Shelby Fillmore Flynn, who visited him twice in his cell yesterday, despite the fact that she recently filed annulment proceedings against him.

Mrs. Flynn, the sister of Mary Miles Minter, refused to comment. But, according to jailers, her smiles, following each through-the-bars farewell were happy ones.

Shortly after Flynn and his bride returned from their impromptu elopement and wedding in Yuma, March 16, last, there appeared one Mrs. Neta Baker Flynn, who announced in no uncertain language that she was still the wife of the director. So Flynn's latest bride filed a petition for annulment. But today friends were freely predicting a reconciliation and a second marriage when Flynn has satisfied the law and the previous Mrs. Flynn.

* * * * *

April 26, 1937

LOS ANGELES HERALD-EXPRESS

A couple of wives of Emmett J. Flynn, the rollicking film director, got together in Superior Court today, and one of them emerged from the courtroom sans the prefix, "Mrs. Flynn." In fact, one Mrs. Flynn helped the other Mrs. Flynn get rid of the Flynn name.

The ex-Mrs. Flynn is Margaret Shelby Fillmore, sister of Mary Miles Minter, former screen star. Flynn and Mrs. Fillmore eloped to Yuma last March 19 and were married.

Today in Judge Myron Westover's court, Margaret Shelby Fillmore Flynn--now the ex-Mrs. Flynn obtained an annulment of the marriage, contending that she married the film director without knowledge that he was still the husband of Mrs. Neta Baker Flynn.

Mrs. Neta Baker Flynn, helping the woman who might have been her successor, flourished the marriage license issued in Miami, Fla., when she married Flynn in 1933.

"No other woman will ever get my husband while I live, except over my dead body," she told Judge Westover. "I love him and am still his wife."

After obtaining the annulment Mrs. Fillmore--the ex-Mrs. Flynn--chatted amiably with Mrs. Flynn in the corridor outside of Judge Westover's court. They exchanged compliments.

"She's the most beautiful little woman I have ever known," said Mrs.

Flynn, placing her arm around Mrs. Fillmore's shoulders. "Any time I can do anything for you, just call me."

* * * * *

May 6, 1937

LOS ANGELES HERALD-EXPRESS

Mary Miles Minter, lovely blonde film star of other days, her mother, Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, and her sister Mrs. Margaret Fillmore, appeared before the county grand jury today in a sudden reopening of the investigation into the 15-year-old murder of William Desmond Taylor, famed screen director.

...Mrs. Fillmore, whose deposition in a civil suit against her mother set off the spark that generated the present investigation, was caustic in her comments as she prepared to answer grand jury questions.

"Since I left the sanitarium some time ago," she snapped, "I have resided in Los Angeles. It has not been safe for me to go to my own home at Laguna Beach.

"I'll tell the grand jury everything I know. I'm not here of my own free will. I'm here under subpoena. But I'm willing to give the grand jury anything I can to help clear up this mess."

...Veiled statements allegedly made in a deposition by Mrs. Fillmore, Miss Minter's sister, were said by District Attorney Fitts to have been the spark which touched off the newest investigation of the Taylor case.

The deposition was given by Mrs. Fillmore on April 3 in connection with a civil suit which she brought against her mother, Mrs. Shelby, to recover \$48,000 in cash.

So pointed did Attorney Clyde Murphy, representing Mrs. Shelby, consider some of the daughter's references, that he called attention of District Attorney Fitts to the deposition.

In the course of the deposition, which started the new inquiry, the following questions were answered:

Q. (By Attorney Murphy) I notice that the bank records show that you and your sister entered this same box about the 22nd of August of last year?

A. (By Mrs. Fillmore) I did it on purpose. I did it to give her two

diaries that were so diabolical and so pathetic that they made Mary Astor's diaries look like a postscript; I didn't want Mrs. Shelby to publish them against the girl.

(Much of the testimony in the deposition centers around a transaction in 1923 when Margaret claims that her mother agreed to give her all of the profits made on the sale of a tract of ground described as the Laughlin Park property. This was purchased for \$36,000 and sold for \$180,000.)

Then Mrs. Fillmore says:

A. ...but there are other obligations besides legal obligations, Mr. Murphy.

Q. (By Murphy) For instance, the moral obligation I assume you refer to...

A. One could call them that.

Q. Was Mrs. Shelby under any legal or moral obligation to you in the year 1923 to give you \$133,000?

A. I wouldn't call it legal. The moral obligation would be a matter of opinion, but it was more or less standing by her against the public, protection. That could have been legal.

Q. You feel that your services in that regard were reasonably worth \$133,000?

A. Well, if I had been in that position I think I would have paid my last cent to have shielded her.

Q. Was she under accusation at that time?

A. Some people said so.

Q. What did you give your mother in return for that agreement?

A. Do you want me to speak very frankly?

Q. Yes.

A. I protected her against the Taylor murder case.

Q. It is your contention, is that correct, that your mother killed William Desmond Taylor?

A. I don't have to answer that.

Q. ...let us assume that you did render her a great many services after

the agreement was made. Had you done anything before that agreement was made?

A. In 1922, yes.

Q. What was that?

A. That was in February, 1922, all during the balance of that year and the balance of '23, and so on.

Q. What was that?

A. That was shielding her from the public, that was shielding her from detectives, that was shielding her from accusations, from dangerous people and continuing at work in an apartment hotel, in opening an office, and having the privilege of contacts that made other deals possible for her..."

* * * * *

May 6, 1937

LOS ANGELES HERALD-EXAMINER

...Miss Minter said she believed the present re-opening of the case was due to an "upheaval" by her sister.

"Margaret has been bitter against our mother, as you know," the actress said. "They, as well as I, have been involved in litigation of some kind for years.

"Margaret wanted to be an actress and yet I took the limelight.

"It's all come out in court, anyway, and as you remember in one case mother had Margaret kept out of court by calling a doctor for her.

"I'm afraid this is just an upheaval."

* * * * *

May 7, 1937

LOS ANGELES TIMES

"I can't live in my own home in Laguna--my mother is there."

Nervous, tears in her eyes, Margaret Fillmore made this declaration yesterday before going before the grand jury and telling what she knows of facts before and after the slaying of William Desmond Taylor.

..."I really have no enmity against my mother," she said later. "This is an embarrassing position. I came here because I was subpoenaed--but I intend to tell everything I know to the grand jury.

"Mother has hurt me deeply--first that psychopathic complaint, then taking that \$18,750 out of the bank and keeping my home--but I am not doing this, please don't think I am, to hurt her in retribution."

Mrs. Fillmore referred to the time last August when Mrs. Shelby filed a psychopathic complaint against her, then testified at the hearing that her daughter was suffering from overindulgence in alcohol.

"Mother went to our safe deposit box, took out \$18,750--all we had in the world--and then did this to me because I scolded her for doing it," Mrs. Fillmore said at that time.

Later Mrs. Fillmore filed two civil suits in Orange county--both of them still pending--one demanding return of the \$18,750 and the other seeking possession of the Laguna Beach home.

Entering the grand jury chambers she did not look at her mother. She was closeted there until noon--telling the story which she had promised to tell--then a recess was taken.

In the offices of Eugene U. Blalock, deputy District Attorney in charge of grand jury affairs, she collapsed at the desk and sobbed brokenly.

Later she came out with the attorney--and was heard to remark, "I told nothing but the truth."

* * * * *

May 7, 1937
LOS ANGELES TIMES

"I don't think mother ever treated Margaret unfairly."

Her blue eyes glistening, Mary Miles Minter leaned against one of the austere marble walls outside the grand jury room yesterday waiting to be called to testify and talked freely to reporters.

"You must know that my sister has deteriorated to such a degree physically in recent years that she sometimes is unable to take care of herself," the former film star said.

* * * * *

August 18, 1937
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Mary Miles Minter's famous diary, for years secreted in her mother's "black bag," was spirited out of the bag back into Mary's possession--by her sister.

That startling statement was made by Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, mother of the once famous film actress, on the witness stand in Superior Court yesterday.

"I had kept the diary with a great many of Mary's letters in a little black bag for many years," Mrs. Shelby told the jury in Judge Parker Wood's court where she is fighting a charge that she wrongfully removed \$48,750 from a safety deposit box held jointly by her and her other daughter, Margaret Shelby Fillmore.

The "lost" diary had been hinted at on numerous occasions in connection with the investigation of the mysterious murder of William Desmond Taylor. It's now in Mary's hands, Mrs. Shelby said.

"I didn't know Margaret knew it was in the bag," said Mrs. Shelby. "When I closed out my safety deposit box in a Laguna Beach bank a year ago, I found that Margaret had invaded the privacy of the box and returned the letters and diary to her sister."

* * * * *

August 31, 1937

LOS ANGELES HERALD-EXPRESS

Margaret Fillmore, sister of Mary Miles Minter, former star of the silent screen, often became intoxicated during 1935 and 1936, her mother, Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, testified today in Superior Judge Parker Wood's court.

Once, Mrs. Fillmore appeared in the patio of their Laguna Beach home clad only in a clinging silken nightgown and Mrs. Shelby testified she turned a garden hose on her.

"Margaret seemed to just love the spray from the flying water," Mrs. Shelby added.

Mrs. Shelby was testifying in the trial of the suit brought against her by Margaret to recover \$48,750 assertedly taken from a joint safety deposit box.

"I was watering the shrubbery in the patio of our Laguna Beach home,"

Mrs. Shelby testified. "Margaret had been drinking, and although it was a very hot day, she had remained in her room.

"Suddenly she appeared in the garden, wearing only a tight fitting silk nightgown. She started abusing me and when she started toward me I was frightened and turned the hose on her. It seemed to startle her and she stood there and smiled, with her hair dripping down across her shoulders. When I saw she enjoyed it I gave her a good ducking."

Mrs. Shelby also told of "chasing" mythical men out of Margaret's bedchamber frequently.

"Margaret suffered from hallucinations and would wake up at night screaming, 'There are men in my room. They are hiding behind the curtains and are under my bed.'

"I would hurry to her and, although there were no men in the room I would have to shake the curtains and crawl under the bed, crying 'Shoo--get out of here--Margaret doesn't want you in here any more.'

"That seemed to please her, and she would throw her arms around my neck and say 'Please, mother, I love you. Lie down here beside me and don't let anyone hurt me. You are all that I have and I am all that you have. We must stick together.'

"Margaret would never let me take the dogs out--even to feed them. She would remain in her room as long as two days and two nights at a time without eating, and the poor dogs would have to remain locked in here with her."

"She always hated Mary (Miles Minter), and any time her name was mentioned would burst into terrible tirades.

"I couldn't get her to eat. I used to prepare the dishes she liked best but many times she attempted to attack me as I worked about the kitchen. I finally discovered that the only way I could keep her away from me was to hold something in my hand while I worked. So usually, I prepared our dinners with either a poker or a broom in my hand."

* * * * *

September 1, 1937
LOS ANGELES TIMES

A threat of death followed by a tussle in the hall outside her bedroom was related yesterday by Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, mother of Mary Miles Minter, in testimony opposing the claim of her other daughter, Mrs. Margaret Fillmore, for \$48,750, in the court of Superior Judge Parker Wood.

"Margaret would follow me around the house," testified Mrs. Shelby, "telling me that she wished I might die and that she would kill me."

Then on the night of July 19, 1936, Mrs. Shelby told the court and jury trying the case, "Margaret grabbed me--by the neck" when she was aroused by noises in the hall adjoining the bedroom. Mrs. Shelby testified that she had long since locked and bolted her bedroom door at night.

A memorandum from Dr. Victor Parkin, alienist, dated July 20, 1936 was introduced as evidence by Attorney Clyde Murphy, representing Mrs. Shelby. It recommended that Margaret Fillmore be taken before the Lunacy Commission and said that Dr. Parkin found her "highly nervous and her conversation rambled."

It was at this period that Mrs. Fillmore was committed to a psychopathic ward, later being released. The present suit is based on the contention that during this incident Mrs. Shelby removed the \$48,750 from a joint safe deposit box in a downtown Los Angeles bank.

* * * * *

September 4, 1937
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Circumstances leading up to the incarceration of Mrs. Margaret Fillmore, sister of Mary Miles Minter, former star of silent films, in the psychopathic ward of General Hospital in August, 1938, yesterday drew queries by Superior Judge Parker Wood.

Details of Mrs. Fillmore's detention were inquired into by Attorneys Richard Cantillon and John Glover, representing Mrs. Fillmore in her suit for recovery of \$48,750 against her mother, Mrs. Charlotte Shelby.

They closely examined Dr. Victor Parkin, alienist, on whose recommendation the 36-year-old woman was committed.

Judge Wood took occasion also to question Dr. Parkin when it developed that he made his original recommendation on May 11, 1936, that he last saw

Mrs. Fillmore on June 4, 1936, and that the recommendation was not used until months later.

Mrs. Fillmore was committed on August 5 and released after a hearing.

Dr. Parkin explained that he had been on his vacation during the interval.

Judge Knight said he would recommend that hereafter physicians making such recommendations be examined at the time the patient is ordered committed.

* * * * *

August 20, 1937
LOS ANGELES NEWS

...Mrs. Fillmore testified in Superior Judge Parker Wood's court that her mother neglected her in her childhood, lavishing attention only on Mary Miles Minter, her sister and former film star. She referred to her mother throughout the testimony as "Mrs. Shelby."

Mrs. Fillmore, a former actress, said she had lost all her "love, respect and admiration" for Miss Minter.

Reference to the Taylor murder mystery came when Mrs. Fillmore was relating circumstances surrounding her detention on an insanity complaint brought by her mother.

"Mrs. Shelby came to see me at the ward where I had been placed and began gushing over me. I asked her what she had done with my money and she said she was taking care of it. I told her she was too extravagant, and that she was not going to do to me what she had done to Mary (Miss Minter).

"I said, "Are your that frightened of the Taylor case? I am not going into that.' "

"Mother replied, 'For God's sake don't go into that.' I told her then, 'I cannot call you mother any more.' "

* * * * *

September 1, 1937
LOS ANGELES NEWS

...Referring to a period during 1934-35 Mrs. Shelby testified:

"My daughter, Margaret, would stay in her room day and night and drink.

During the night she would come to my room and threaten to commit suicide."

Mrs. Shelby had given virtually identical testimony at a General Hospital hearing on her daughter's sanity, which resulted in a suggestion by psychiatrists that Mrs. Fillmore be placed in a sanitarium for several months on her own volition.

"I often wondered whether my daughter, Margaret, would live or die," Mrs. Shelby continued. "She was drinking more and more. She would not eat. She would stay all day and night in her room, where she would have a bottle. Mornings after she would be groggy, irritable and suspicious."

Mrs. Shelby said she turned over \$35,000, realized from sale of a portion of family property in Louisiana, to Mrs. Fillmore because she feared her other daughter, Miss Minter, would institute an accounting action against her.

Mrs. Shelby said she wished her daughter to "learn the bond business" and added she had made "Margaret personally responsible for the \$35,000."

* * * * *

August 24, 1937

LOS ANGELES TIMES

...The Taylor case was injected into the testimony through a deposition made by Mrs. Fillmore some time ago in which she stated she had protected her mother during the investigation which followed Taylor's slaying.

"Did you have any damaging information which may have implicated your mother?" Murphy asked Mrs. Fillmore.

"I protected Mrs. Shelby from reporters and others to keep her from making those wild and sensational statements," Mrs. Fillmore replied.

At another point in the proceedings she said:

"Mrs. Shelby would say impulsive things incriminating herself. She did not want Mary's reputation as the flower of American girlhood to suffer."

Questioned concerning the whereabouts of Mrs. Shelby and Mary Miles Minter on the night of the Taylor murder, Mrs. Fillmore said:

"Mary came in about 9 p.m. in a very hysterical manner. She picked up a book and began reading about the South Sea Islands.

"The book seemed to amuse her, but I picked it up later and found it dry

and uninteresting.

"Mrs. Shelby was not at home that day. I knew she was out all day and night hunting certain men to locate Mary."

Mrs. Fillmore also cited an instance in which a former film executive openly accused her mother of having murdered Taylor.

* * * * *

September 13, 1938

LOS ANGELES NEWS

Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, mother of Mary Miles Minter, former screen luminary, yesterday was virtually accused by another daughter, Mrs. Margaret Fillmore, of having killed William Desmond Taylor, film director of the silent screen.

The bitterly made accusation came in Superior Judge Thomas C. Gould's court during litigation involving furniture purportedly worth \$50,000--litigation which played a part in one of a long series of suits featuring mother and daughter.

Anticlimax of the still unsolved Taylor slaying, which occurred 15 years ago and still has some of the nation's most expert criminologists baffled. Mrs. Fillmore, as in previous suits, again shot implications at her mother, quoting the latter as stating Mrs. Shelby's mother had thrown the Taylor death gun into a Louisiana bayou.

"This mad woman," Mrs. Fillmore said, staring straight before her, and referring to her mother, "would cut your heart out for a dime..."

Mrs. Fillmore was being questioned by Clyde F. Murphy, attorney for the mother, concerning ownership of the disputed furniture.

After Mrs. Fillmore made the statement that her mother had not owned any furniture since Taylor was murdered, Murphy asked:

"Did she tell you she wanted to be in a position to get out of the country in a hurry?"

"Many, many times," was the answer.

"What were her reasons?"

"She was frightened by the Taylor murder case--she still is--it is still

pending."

"What did she tell you?"

"She told me they were pinning it pretty close to her. She was awfully worried. And she was very grateful that her mother had gone to Louisiana and thrown the gun that had killed William Desmond Taylor into a bayou on the plantation."

After the court session ended, Mrs. Fillmore explained that the plantation mentioned belonged to the Miles family and was located at Bastrop, La., near New Orleans.

She explained that Mrs. Shelby mother was Julia B. Miles, who had died in 1925.

Mrs. Fillmore testified:

"Mrs. Shelby was scared to death that if they ever pinned it on her she couldn't get out of it. That was what she told me time and time again."

"Did she ever tell you that she killed Taylor?" Murphy asked.

"She never told me that she had murdered Taylor but what else could I think?"

"When was the first time you came to the conclusion that your mother killed Taylor?"

"I am not accurate. I didn't see the murder done but Shelby (her mother) would kill anybody for \$1000. Particularly Mary when she was working--this mad woman would cut out your heart for a dime--

"She hates men. She's a man hater--money is her god--she was scared that someone would take away Mary, the goose that laid her golden egg."

After the hearing closed yesterday, Mrs. Shelby branded as "ridiculous" the charges and said she would ask the district attorney to reopen the Taylor case and either put her on trial for murder or absolve her of the murder once and for all.

* * * * *

December 23, 1939

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Margaret Shelby Fillmore, 39, sister of Mary Miles Minter, former star of

silent films and central figure in the William Desmond Taylor murder case, yesterday died at her Valentine St. home after a long illness.

Mrs. Fillmore, divorced since 1927 from her former husband, Hugh Fillmore, was married in March, 1937, to Emmett J. Flynn after a Yuma elopement and granted an annulment April 27 of the same year. On June 5, 1937, Flynn died.

A little more than two months later she began a suit against her mother asking \$48,750, which she asserted her mother, Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, took from a safety deposit box both shared in a Los Angeles bank.

A jury awarded Mrs. Fillmore \$20,000 after hearing the suit...

Funeral services for Mrs. Fillmore will be conducted at noon Tuesday from the Garrett Bros. chapel, 921 Venice Blvd., followed by private internment.

* * * * *

December 27, 1939

LOS ANGELES HERALD-EXAMINER

During her troubled life there had been times when Margaret Shelby Fillmore, sister of Mary Miles Minter, the film star whose career waned with the murder of her fiance and director, William Desmond Taylor, could number her friends by the hundred.

Yesterday there were only 10 persons present at funeral services for Mrs. Fillmore, who died last Friday after a long illness.

In the chapel of the Garrett Brothers Mortuary at 921 Venice boulevard were eight friends--five women and three men--and in the mourners' room off the chancel were her mother, Mrs. Charlotte Shelby, and her sister, Miss Minter, who at times had been estranged from her.

Internment took place at Forest Lawn Memorial Park.

Mrs. Fillmore in 1937 won a \$20,000 judgment from her mother, charging that Mrs. Shelby had taken money from a safe deposit box.

The lawsuit took a sensational turn when Mrs. Fillmore declared part of the money was due her for "protecting" her mother during the Taylor case investigation.

By an ironic coincidence, the name William D. Taylor figured in the

family pattern even in Mrs. Fillmore's death, for the embalmer who prepared the 39-year-old woman's body for burial is a man named William D. Taylor.

Wallace Smith: February 11, 1922

The following is another of Wallace Smith's sensationalizing dispatches on the Taylor case. It is of particular interest because it contains the first fully-developed incarnation of the "drug gang theory", which would become one of the major theories about the case. (See A DEED OF DEATH for a modern proponent of this theory.) Also in this dispatch, Smith's written attacks on Mabel Normand began to increase in intensity.

February 11, 1922

Wallace Smith

CHICAGO AMERICAN

Los Angeles---The woman who really loved William Desmond Taylor and whose love prompted her to sacrifice all her own brilliance that he might shine more brightly in his chosen sky, was called upon by the district attorney today in a desperate effort to solve the mystery of the eccentric director's murder.

More than any one else this woman, famed as a clever scenario writer, knew the secrets under the mask which Taylor turned to the world. More than any one else she knew the brooding that went on behind the face he showed the world as some actor might show his face in familiar "makeup."

For years she had labored by his side, uncomplaining and unselfish, even when he was carrying on affairs with other women. She advised him and took care of him. She helped him with the problems of his profession and soothed away his troubled moods.

Since the tragedy this woman has not been seen in filmland.

She has withdrawn to the seclusion of her home and in the deepest mourning has grieved over the eternal parting with her great love.

The devotion of the woman has been one of the marvels of the Hollywood

moving picture colony, where such loyalty and self-sacrifice are extremely rare. [8]

The district attorney wished especially to question her, it was reported, regarding the latest sensational theory presented to him to account for the slaying of the director.

According to this story, Taylor was shot to death by blackmailing killers hired by a gang of eastern drug smugglers as he fought to rescue from their merciless talons a film actress of international repute, who fell victim to the dope ring during a gay trip to New York last year.

What is more, the Taylor tragedy was predicted six months ago by a government secret service man familiar with the activities of dope peddlers in Hollywood and familiar with the episode of the East and its sinister epilogue in California.

This startling information and this amazing theory were in the hands of district attorney Thomas Lee Woolwine today after he had summoned Mabel Normand, moving picture star, to his office despite her physician's orders and after he had questioned her for more than three hours.

It was midnight before the prosecutor had finished questioning her about the life and death of the eccentric director to whom she was once reported engaged, to whom she wrote the "blessed baby" letters and in whose study she visited but few minutes before the slaying.

She was obviously weary when she at least came from the prosecutor's offices, surrounded by a squad of detectives. She wore a henna sport suit with wide cuffs and collar of gray angora. On her head was crushed a mannish brown fedora. She stood with her hands in her coat pockets and her feet pigeon-toed in a typically Mabel Normand manner when newspapermen asked her for an interview.

"I've told the district attorney everything I know," she said, and her voice broke harshly as if she had spoken much.

"I'm trying to help him."

A photographer's flash light boomed. She jumped.

"Oh, my Gawd," cried the film star and hurried away to her car surrounded

by her escort.

Nor would Prosecutor Woolwine divulge what had been told him. He chose to keep secret the sensational development of the eastern dope ring and its machinations, even after other sources had disclosed it to The Chicago Evening American.

It was known, however, that the tale had been revealed to him by a moving picture actor and a director after they had been found by the district attorney's men in Culver City. It was known, too, that their revelation was made but an hour or two before Miss Normand was ordered to the district attorney's office.

"The case certainly is a blind alley," declared Mr. Woolwine. "I think Miss Normand is doing everything she can to help. Of course, I've been badly fooled before, but believe in what she has had to say. I could say a lot of things -- that have come into my head -- but it is better to wait."

Unofficially, however, it was announced that the investigation, based on the latest information, had swerved abruptly to the new trail and it was stated that the first real clew had been uncovered that may lead to a solution of the weird mystery. [9]

It was understood that the actress involved, a very close friend of the eccentric director, had collapsed since the murder. She had hired gunmen, it was reported, to protect her lest the eastern gangsters, fearing that she will tell her story, murder her, too.

Already the extortions of the dope gang, according to the secret service informant, have made fearful inroads upon the very sizeable fortune accumulated by the star through the screen.

Her name had been drawn into the mystery that came with Taylor's death. Her dealings with the drug peddlers have been a matter of Hollywood gossip for many months.

The stories of the Culver City actor and the director, both of whom were interviewed at length by Prosecutor Woolwine's chief aid, Deputy Doran, and three detectives, corroborated each other in every detail. Their names for the present must be withheld.

"We became acquainted with this federal agent while we were doing some location work in Sonora," declared the director. "He was assigned to running down dope smugglers and worked out of Los Angeles. He had found a lot of 'hop heads' -- that is, drug users -- in the Hollywood colony.

"We got pretty friendly with him while we were there and he showed us a list of the actors and actresses he knew who were regular patrons of the drug peddlers. Say, I thought I knew a little about how wild things were in Hollywood, but this list surprised me.

"B--- that was this agent's name -- then told me about Miss ---, the actress. There was a lot of gossip about her at that time. She had been known as a morphine user and there were a lot of wild stories about the things she did. She had other habits, too, even more revolting.

"At that time her press agent was quietly trying to give out the impression that she had recovered from a serious illness -- she had taken the cure, you know -- and she was trying to pose as completely recovered and on her good behavior.

"This made B---, the federal agent, laugh. He said she was at it worse than ever.

"'And before she's through somebody's going to get killed on her account,' he said. 'She may get it herself. I wouldn't be surprised to see it happen before another year rolls around.'

"Then he told us about this eastern trip and what happened. 'Somehow or other these dope dealers seem to know victims of drugs even from strange places,' he said, 'and often those in one city told their pals in other cities when a "customer" was moving.'

"Anyway Miss --- went east to New York and Atlantic City, and from what we heard back in Hollywood she was having a gay time. We didn't think anything of it because she always seemed to be having a gay time. She was a leader at the most notorious of the dope parties. But we didn't know, of course, that she was mixed up with the eastern dope ring. [10]

"According to B---, the gang was not satisfied with charging her great sums for the dope they sold her, and without which she seemed powerless, but

its agents plotted to trap her in a compromising position. This they did.

"That and the drugs gave them their chance for blackmail. She began to pay them. They weren't pikers, according to B---. They demanded it in large chunks, and they got it. Her latest picture was just being shown then and others were being taken. She could not afford, she felt, to take chances on being exposed.

"When she returned to Los Angeles they sent at least two men here to keep track of her and to keep on demanding money. They did. She has made a small fortune in the films. And they reaped a small fortune through their scheme, according to B---.

"'Some day,' B--- told us, 'she will make a stand. Of course, she should have done it in the first place. If she does the chances are she'll get somebody else to help her. And that's when the shooting is going to begin.

"'Usually blackmailers don't kill people,' he said, 'but this is a different kind of a gang, and Miss --- knows too much about what they have been doing. If she ever started to talk she could put them all in prison. They'll kill to protect themselves.'

"B--- is in the east now. He was transferred only a short time ago. We remembered his story when we heard of Taylor's death. We know that this actress who was being blackmailed was a close friend of Taylor's and we put two and two together."

So did the investigators. Armed with this information, it was simple to build up the tragic picture of Taylor's slaying. They discovered that the actress had visited Taylor. One report declared that she was at the Alvarado St. home the day that Taylor was murdered.

On the same day, it will be recalled, Taylor drew \$2,300 from a Los Angeles bank. This and the theory that he had drawn the money to quiet the demands of a blackmailer, revealed in these dispatches a week ago, have occupied the Los Angeles police in their investigations. [11]

They remembered, too, the statement ascribed to Taylor.

"There is only one thing to do to a blackmailer," he said in a sudden burst of passion to friends, "and that is -- kill him."

The outburst came but a few days before the slaying.

According to the present theory, the actress had appealed to Taylor for assistance. It was impossible for her to raise the cash at once. Blackmailers do not care for promissory notes or checks. Taylor drew the \$2,300.

That same afternoon he took the money back to the bank. Had he resolved after a visit with the woman, to call for a show-down from the blackmailers? Had he made up his mind to defy the eastern gangsters and remove her forever from their clutches?

It seemed to be the most likely theory that had been presented to the operatives attempting to run down Taylor's assassin.

Following this theory, Taylor alone faced the hired assassin of the dope rings, when the killer, armed with the fatal revolver, entered his study. The rest of the tragedy, based on the information of the federal agent, was easily pictured.

The investigators were eager to question the woman named by the secret service man. At present, according to their reports, she was so ill that it was impossible for her to speak.

Just before Miss Normand went into the district attorney's office her manager gave the following written statement to the press:

"No one will ever know how I regret this terrible tragedy. I have told truthfully everything I know and am very sorry, indeed, I cannot offer any solution whatever as to the motive which prompted the terrible deed. I have satisfied the Los Angeles authorities, both police and district attorney's office, that I know nothing about the murder and have offered my services or a statement at any time I may be called to help apprehend the assassin.

"The handkerchief and gown found in Mr. Taylor's apartment have been identified as other than mine. It has been established that I was not in love with Taylor, that he escorted me to my car that evening and waited until I drove away, when we waved good-bye to each other.

"Please tell the public that I know nothing about this terrible happening and that Mr. Taylor and I did not quarrel."

Even earlier than that, in a boudoir interview, she had dwelt at some length on the happenings of her visit to Taylor's home in an interview with a volunteer investigator. During the interview she produced two books that Taylor had given her -- one on the Russian ballet and one on period costumes - - and protested that she was familiar with Freud and Nietzsche before she knew the director.

"I did not quarrel with Mr. Taylor" she declared. "Why, he put his arms around me as we walked to the car together. They try to place a great deal of importance upon these letters of mine, but, really, they were just personal, joking sort of things.

"He'd write me little, funny notes, and I'd reply in the same vein. Sometimes I'd draw in a little daffydil, you know, like Tad draws, or a comical sketch of myself. That's all they were.

"They have said so many things. I was not engaged to marry him, and I was not out with him New Year's Eve. I was not even in the same hotel with him."

She repeated the story of how she had gone downtown to a jeweler's shop and, finding it closed, had bought a sack of peanuts and a copy of the Police Gazette before driving to Taylor's home. She pictured Taylor in the height of spirits, amiable and joking, as she talked with him in his study.

Although obviously nervous and noticeably hoarse after the Woolwine interview, Miss Normand seemed to have recovered splendidly since the day she collapsed at the side of Taylor's coffin in the cathedral, where his funeral service was spoken.

Prosecutor Woolwine, charging through until long after midnight with his investigation, was said to have interrogated a woman witness who declares she saw a man spying from behind a tree on Miss Normand and Taylor after the director had taken his fair visitor to her car.

"I just happened to be passing Taylor's home," said the mystery witness. "I saw Miss Normand's car there and I saw she and Taylor standing there, chatting light-heartedly. I looked at them casually, and then I was startled to see a man standing behind a tree and watching their every move.

"He was still there, I believe, when Miss Normand waved good-by and her car drove off. I didn't see what became of him."

Prosecutor Woolwine and his aides visited the Alvarado St. home of Taylor and with the district attorney's office playing the part of the dead man, attempted to restore the scene of the crime as it was found by Henry Peavey, Taylor's houseman.

Another angle of the investigation concerned the prominent moving picture producer known to have carried on a notorious affair with an actress friend of Taylor's. This producer had denied himself to all visitors ever since the slaying of Taylor. [12]

As outlined in these dispatches yesterday, he was to be questioned because of the theory that, in a jealous rage, he had killed Taylor because of Taylor's friendship for the woman. The producer and the actress, according to Hollywood gossip, recently had become reconciled after a series of fist fights that were the talk of the colony.

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NEXT ISSUE: Adela Rogers St. Johns:
Eulogy, Apology, Psychology, Mythology

NOTES:

[1] The "Eastern capitalist" would logically have been Dixon, and allows us to hypothesize the following conspiracy: Dixon comes to L.A. to marry Minter, as she promised, but Minter refuses to marry him (see TAYLOROLOGY #7); so Dixon hires Peavey to kill Taylor in order to clear the path for Dixon's wooing of Minter--and hopefully Minter will find solace and comfort in his arms; but instead, the murder drives Minter into tearful seclusion and Dixon, having already come under suspicion, decides to retreat back to the East. Fanciful theory, but very unlikely as it would have required consummate acting skill from Peavey.

[2] WDT: DOSSIER, pp. 324-325.

[3] LOS ANGELES TIMES, August 24, 1937.

[4] See A CAST OF KILLERS, pp. 266-268.

[5] See WDT: DOSSIER, p. 400.

[6] See WDT: DOSSIER, pp. 367-401.

[7] Of course, Margaret Shelby was never a "star." Her film career had been limited to supporting roles in some of her sister's films.

[8] The preceding paragraphs referred to Julia Crawford Ivers, who was Taylor's scenario writer on most of the films he directed.

[9] The references that follow are clearly to Mabel Normand.

[10] Mabel Normand took a trip to New York in September 1921.

[11] The rumor that Taylor had withdrawn \$2,300 on the day he was killed was later refuted. See WDT:DOSSIER, pp. 369-370.

[12] Mack Sennett.

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.uno.edu/~drif/arbuckle/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>

For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 18 -- June 1994 Editor: Bruce Long *
* TAYLOROLOGY may be freely distributed *

CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE:

Adela Rogers St. Johns:

Eulogy, Apology, Psychology, Mythology

What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

Adela Rogers St. Johns was in a unique position to comment on the Taylor case. Although she was in New York at the time of the murder, her home was in Hollywood. As the western editor of PHOTOPLAY she was very familiar with life in the movie colony, the facts and the rumors. In addition she had been good friends with Mabel Normand for almost a decade prior to the murder. Over the years, St. Johns wrote several times about the Taylor murder and about the personalities close to it. Some of her earlier commentary was contradicted by her later writings. Which was the truth?

Eulogy

Immediately after Taylor was killed she was interviewed by a New York newspaper, and then wrote an article eulogizing Taylor.

* * * * *

February 4, 1922
NEW YORK HERALD

...Another report brought forward in motion picture circles here was that the director and Miss Normand had feared trouble of some sort and that they had made plans secretly to have a wedding to head it off. Miss Adla St. John [sic], writer on motion picture topics, who has just returned from a trip to the coast, said she had not heard of such premonitions.

"Mr. Taylor was one of the quietest and best liked men in the motion picture colony," she said. "His death came as a sudden shock to me, as it did to all his friends here. I don't know of his having had an enemy. Every player was delighted every time he heard he was going to be under Mr. Taylor's direction."

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February 5, 1922
Adela Rogers St. Johns
BOSTON ADVERTISER
February 13, 1922
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

(New York)--One of the last people I said good-bye to when I left Hollywood a month ago was William D. Taylor.

Now--Bill Taylor is dead, foully murdered, cut down in the prime of a manhood that was a rock of all of us.

And it isn't very easy to write about him.

There are so many, many things that I remember about him.

So many kind, fine, big things. So much that was worth while, that was inspirational and clean.

If they had to shoot a director, there are a lot we could have spared rather well.

Neither his friends--and I have the honor to count myself in that list--nor the motion picture industry could spare William D. Taylor.

As a general rule, I don't hold much of a brief for men.

I'm not particularly keen about being a woman, and I certainly wouldn't want to be an angel. But a man--heaven deliver us!

But William D. Taylor was the sort of man that revived your faith in the sex.

For three years it has been my business, as Western editor of a motion picture magazine, to know as much as possible about what was going on in the film capital. I spend my days around the studios, gathering news and overhearing scandal--when there is any. I flatter myself that my earlier training as a reporter has helped me to keep pretty close tabs on what goes on in Hollywood.

In these three years, in which I have known Mr. Taylor pretty well, I have never heard one thing said against him, one breath of criticism, one whispered scandal circulating about the studio lots.

And that is saying a good deal of a place where we have nothing to talk about but each other.

Why, everybody adored him.

Betty Compson dropped into my house to say good-by two evenings before I left. She was more radiant than usual, because Mr. Taylor was going to direct her next picture. Every star on the Lasky lot, man and woman, wanted to work with him.

He wasn't a genius. I don't believe he knew the meaning of the word temperament. But he was so steady, so consistent, so sure in his judgments, that he couldn't turn out a bad piece of work.

Did you ever see him?

Tall, bronzed, erect, a captain in the Canadian [sic] army, with all the dignity of bearing of a soldier. His hair was just beginning to gray, his eyes were the quiet, calm blue-grey that always gives you a comfortable feeling. A fine-looking man.

I can't tell you whether or not Mabel Normand and William D. Taylor were

engaged. I don't know. As a matter of fact, I don't think they knew. I have seen them together, I have been with them together, and I do know that a great affection and friendship existed between them.

It is my own belief, based entirely on what I saw and on what I know of Mabel, that eventually they might have married. It was the sort of affection that leads to marriage.

That's why I feel a great sorrow when I think of this tragedy.

Mabel Normand and I have been friends for twelve years. And the keynote that I have found in Mabel's character in all those years is loyalty. It's a fetish, a religion with her. You may not see her for six months, but if you need her it's as though only six hours had elapsed.

What that child is suffering under this thing no one will ever know.

I am too far away from the scene of the crime to have any settled theory of it.

But of the theories that I have heard voiced, and that have been wired me by my friends in Hollywood, I can tell you a little, and I can tell you what I think of them.

Personally, I believe William Taylor was the victim of a shooting that had nothing to do with himself or with any act of his. That does happen quite often, you know. It might even happen to a motion picture director.

Either this valet of his--Sands--with whom he had quarreled, drank a lot of bootleg whisky and in a frenzy went gunning for the man against whom he thought he had a grudge, or else some inexperienced burglar, knowing that a movie director lived in that house and figuring, of course, that all motion picture directors are rich, broke in to steal, lost his head, shot and ran.

Los Angeles has had a great many holdups lately, most of them done by boys. And any crime expert will tell you that it is your boy on his first job who commits murders. Oldtimers generally don't carry a loaded gun.

Then there is the jealousy theory--that possibly some one jealous of Mabel watched her visit to the Taylor bungalow, saw her leave, and in a red rage shot down the man with whom she had spent an hour or two.

That doesn't hold water for a very simple reason. Mabel isn't like that.

Mabel is a coquette, a flirt, the kind of a girl that men get crazy about. But--Mabel always ends them too quickly for damage. If she goes to a dance and some nice boy gets a desperate crush on her, Mabel has a lovely time kidding him. When he calls up the next day and her secretary says, "Mr. So-and-So is on the phone," Mabel says, "I don't know him. Tell him I've gone to Europe."

In all the years of her picture work Mabel's name has been coupled with only two men before Taylor's--and both those men are big characters, highly respected and above suspicion.

As to some ghost from Taylor's past--maybe. I'm not idiot enough to vouch for any man's past.

But isn't it strange that William Taylor should have anything in his past that would cause a terrible murder--William Taylor, the fine, clean gentleman that we all knew and loved so well?

How dare they parallel the shooting of Taylor with the Elwell murder? What single justification is there for putting the character of a man like Taylor, against whom not one single concrete thing can be brought, with a man whose reputation was as notorious as that of Elwell?

How dare they begin immediately the old and always unproven stories of wild "hop" orgies, of alleged night life in Hollywood that will be "searched and raked over."

It is an injustice that makes the blood of everyone who knew the man absolutely boil.

William D. Taylor, president of the Motion Picture Directors' Association, stood for everything that was clean and fine on the screen. He had a breadth of vision and a businesslike understanding of what the screen needed. We are going to feel his loss keenly.

Those of us who loved and revered him have lost a friend, a man who always thought of others, who had a splendid dignity and strength to which a lot of us went in trouble.

I can see room for only one emotion--sorrow. I can feel only one thing in my heart--grief for the loss of my friend, horror at this dastardly cutting down of a man who should have lived.

That is all I can see for any one to feel.

Some day somebody is going to write for you the truth about Hollywood. Some day some one is going to tell you the things you ought to know--the bad things about the small group of people who do wrong, but the truth about the great body who live decently, cleanly, and normally and who have to suffer silently the sweeping, and as I say, always unproven denunciations of Hollywood.

In the meantime, a gentleman has died.

As to who shot William D. Taylor from behind, I am terribly in the dark. But his I am sure of--when the truth comes out, as it will, there will be nothing in it to reflect in any way upon the good name of one of the finest men I have ever known.

Nor upon the good name of the girl who loved him--Mabel Normand.

Apology

Her eulogy of Taylor was followed by a several articles defending the reputation of Hollywood, which was being severely attacked in many newspapers.

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February 17, 1922

Adela Rogers St. Johns

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

February 20, 1922

BOSTON ADVERTISER

(Chicago)--What in the world is this all about--this Hollywood stuff?

I have lived in Hollywood for a long time. I graduated from Hollywood High School more years ago than I like to remember. I've only been away a month.

But I certainly don't recognize the old home place from some of the lurid and picturesque descriptions I've been reading lately.

I frankly admit going to a lot of Hollywood parties--a lot of them.

I admit knowing a lot of motion picture stars. First of all, it happens

to be my business. Second, I like 'em and I'm not nearly such a terrible person as I ought to be to travel with this uproaring, hop-shooting, snow-sniffing, immoral gang I read about.

My goodness, I wonder where they keep it?

I spend eleven months of the year out there. And I give you my personal word of honor that I've never seen anybody sticking hypodermic needles in their tummies yet.

I want to describe to you the best I can some of the "wild parties" I've sat in on out there.

Last Christmas night the Wallace Reids had open house for their friends. Mrs. Reid, who used to be Dorothy Davenport, and I have been pals for some ten years and if any church or league of any kind can show me a finer woman or a better wife and mother than Dot I'll donate a couple of cut glass bath robes.

Well to get to the party. In the first place, I admit there were a few bottles around that broke the Volstead act. Why, we were so desperately vicious we even had wine punch. There were eight or ten disabled soldiers from the Arrowhead Hospital for whom Wally had sent his car. I remember Jeanie MacPherson and her mother were there. Little Bill Reid's Christmas tree was about somewhere.

I suppose we made a lot of noise. Everybody danced and I do remember one girl who had on a black velvet dress and little pink silk bloomers. She did some comedy falls for us--like you see in pictures--and I had a flash or two of pink silk bloomers. You can see much less--or much more--any evening you drop in at the Follies.

Later in the evening Wally and Dot and Mr. And Mrs. Bill Desmond and my husband and I got real reckless and played games. We sat down on the floor and everybody took some cards. Then each represented an animal and when anybody matched our cards we had to make a noise like the animal we were supposed to be or else we lost our cards.

That may be terribly immoral but some how it seemed all right to me.

Another party I went to once was at Viola Dana's. It was given in honor of Winnie Sheehan, vice president of the Fox Company. Yes, they served drinks.

How many homes are there outside of Hollywood that serve drinks at a party? How many people who have a small cellar occasionally invite in a few friends and have a glass or two? Is that the sole prerogative of the picture colony? Is it never done the same anywhere else--in Chicago or New York, for example?

At this party we had the most fascinating entertainment. Viola had prepared a two-reel feature film with some delicious take-offs on the picture colony, quite harmless hits at our little personal vanities and characteristics. Then Alice Lake and Buster Keaton did a lovely burlesque of the ice scenes from "Way Down East." I never laughed so much in my life.

Afterward we danced. Maybe one or two of the boys drank too much. But I just spent a month in New York and I saw several instances of that kind--and they weren't all picture actors, either.

Do you know what I did the last time I spent an evening with Mabel Normand? Sat before an open fire and read Stephen Leacock out loud. Yes, and at 10 o'clock we had some hot chocolate. You may disagree with our literary taste and our choice of refreshment, but surely no moral indictment can be brought on those grounds.

Somebody published a story not long ago about Mabel making her escort play horse and let her ride around on his back in a public cafe--said it was her favorite indoor sport. Well, I don't know who said it and I don't care. It's a lie. And that's that. I've told her ten million times that her fantastic sense of humor--which, by the way, you are all glad enough to let lighten many dark hours for you--ought to be controlled a little and not lead her into such wild pranks. But, at that, I'll back Mabel Normand as the best read woman in America--and you can bring on your college professors and your high-brows any time you like.

My father is a lawyer. From the time I sat in the court room, when my feet wouldn't touch the floor, I've been taught to weigh evidence. Sit down, if you're interested in this thing and weigh the evidence a little bit. I don't mean what people say, but the actual evidence. On what can you base an indictment of Hollywood? Two or three nasty scandals--the Arbuckle case. The Taylor murder. But who shot Bill Taylor? Is there anything yet to convince you

that he was killed for any immoral reason or that he was killed in any way as a result of his connection with pictures?

Suppose Mary Miles Minter was in love with him. She's an unmarried girl and her mother keeps pretty close tab on the family wage-earner. Bill Taylor was a big, fascinating, strong man. No wonder she fell in love with him. As for Mabel, Mabel will fall in love and men will fall in love with her as long as she lives. But it isn't because she's a screen star, it's because she's the most fascinating, adorable, irresistible small creature that the witches ever brewed.

Let's be a little fair. Let's not lose our heads and, above all, our sense of humor. Let's not think continually and all the time about the people who have made false steps.

After all, did it ever occur to you that if 1000 people go out for an auto ride on a Sunday afternoon and come back happy and peaceful and contented, their names don't appear next day in headlines? But if one of that thousand gets killed while driving he has eight columns or so of type. That's news.

So it is in pictures. People like the Conrad Nagels, the Jack Holts with their three kiddies, the William De Milles with their intellectual, political set, the Douglas MacLeans, the Sam Woods go on forever leading exemplary lives after which any one might model. But you don't hear about them.

Don't you see?

I'm only putting one side of the case. I do believe the producers should have morality clauses in their contracts. If a bank knows a young man in direct contact with a large sum of money is gambling the bank fires him. If the picture magnate knows a man or woman star leads a notoriously immoral life, he should kick him right off the lot.

That's our job now--the job of the industry--to clean things up where they need it. And we admit there are places where it is needed.

But in order to do that we need not and cannot admit that Hollywood is a festering sore of perversion and vice.

The man who said girls who come who come to Hollywood all must succeed

only through immoral relations--I believe he camouflaged by saying sentimental relations--with men probably will wake up some morning soon with his teeth knocked down his throat. May McAvoy's brother might do it--or Lois Wilson's father. Or Florence Vidor's husband. Bob Ellis, who is married to that sweet, wonderful girl, May Allison, might take a crack at him.

There are immoral people in Hollywood. It is, after all, an artists' colony. It is filled with temperamental nuts. It is a small gathering of people who know each other very well, indeed. I know there are a few stars who do horrible things. I know Roscoe Arbuckle lost his head under prosperity and lived a life for which he is now getting paid several thousandfold.

If it wasn't so funny, I couldn't help resenting this picture they draw of my home village--why it sounds like the Apache district of Paris.

If you could see it. Honestly, I think you'd never be the same again if you'd read the press agenting stuff we've had recently. It's a nice, quiet little village.

Lots of nights there isn't anything to do after 12 o'clock and everybody goes to bed at home.

I have two small kids--a girl and a boy.

I haven't the faintest objection in the world to having them brought up in Hollywood.

Nor do I admit that every girl who calls herself a motion picture actress is one. Lots of them wouldn't recognize a camera if they saw one.

Do you read in headlines that Mary Pickford virtually supports a large orphanage in Los Angeles? Do you have it flung at your face that Tommy Meighan takes care of a great number of crippled children? Are you constantly reminded that stars, after working eight or ten hours at the studio, give more hours and more time to answering every demand of charity; that there is never a day goes by at a big studio that they are not asked for talent to appear for charity, and that they are never refused?

Let's be fair and a little more sane about this thing. Let's look at both sides of it. For there really are two sides, you know.

Perhaps you don't realize how much concerted action is now taking place

among motion picture producers in an effort to guard this great art--this art that gives you so much pleasure--against any further vulnerability along the moral lines. Quietly, and partially awaiting the advent of Mr. Will Hays as director-general of the industry, the big producers of the game are getting together and mapping out moral housecleaning of the studios. They have decided, as I know, that those whose lives are such that they may bring shame and unpleasantness upon the name of the body of people who work in pictures will have to go.

I talked with Mabel Normand last night over the long-distance telephone between here and Los Angeles.

Her voice haunted me all night. She was crying. Her nurses didn't want her to talk, but she wanted to ask me if I believed she had anything to do with the Taylor murder, if anybody back here believed it?

And I told her what I believed, that no one connected her with it, no one believed she had done anything that any connection with the shooting. And I told her that I loved her and for her to take care of herself. Mabel's health is not good. Doctor's verdicts last year were discouraging--and no one can make Mabel take proper care of herself.

After all, outside of infinite rumors, constantly changing theories, reports, conjectures, what have we to tie the shooting of William D. Taylor to Hollywood, or any part of Hollywood, or any of its manners and customs?

Not a darn thing.

And I don't think we ever will have.

Nobody can keep a lot of fool girls with blonde curls from falling in love with a man. It happens in offices--often. No one can keep them from writing notes to him, if they haven't been taught that love letters are the most dangerous things in the world to sign except checks.

What's that got to do with Hollywood. Doesn't it happen anywhere else?

I think so.

* * * * *

February 21, 1922

Adela Rogers St. Johns

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Last year when May Allison was going to New York she dropped into my house for lunch the day before she left.

"Going to buy a lot of clothes in New York?" I asked.

"Good heavens, no. I'm going to get a chance to wear some of those I've got. You never get a chance to show off your good clothes in Hollywood," said the blonde screen star.

And that's the sad truth.

I've been in New York for just a month.

I've been back in Hollywood a couple of days, and it's pretty dull out here, I tell you. After the bright lights of a big city, the curfew life we lead in the famous wicked film colony is a bit difficult to take. But it's a good place to rest up in, anyway.

No cabarets. No place to dance nearer than six miles. An occasional party where the piece de resistance of the evening is likely to be the good old game of consequences. Listening to Wally Reid and Wanda Hawley play duets on the saxophone and the piano.

Oh, well, I can get the papers and read what some of these writers that I never heard of, never saw in Hollywood, and who probably have never been there, have to say about it. Get a thrill out of that!

Hollywood--the prize "bad town" of the West! Why, Hangtown and Bodie in the good old days when shootin' was shootin' sound like a Seventh Day Adventist Sanitarium on Saturday compared with the things you read about Hollywood.

Of course I don't know anything about it. I only live and work there.

And yet--and yet--just before I came away, Mrs. Wallace Reid cried on my shoulder because she was so bored--sitting home every night in front of the fire with only an occasional dinner at the Hollywood Country Club to brighten her existence.

First of all, there's our hotel life, of course. We have a very famous hotel in Hollywood. The Hollywood Hotel. A ramshackle old building which has

been standing sedately on its corner for years and years and years. But it has housed more famous people than most architectural palaces. It has a nice family dining room where everybody has their own table and knows the waitresses by their first names.

On Thursday nights they have dances in the lobby, after rolling up the carpets. I suppose to be in the modern style of Hollywood journalism I should call them "dance orgies", but--I just can't. I haven't a great deal of regard for the truth in literature, but I have some inhibitions.

The last Thursday night we drifted up there we found all the nice old ladies from Iowa and Kansas who come out for the winter sitting around in their best black satins, ready for the fray. Anita Stewart was there, shocking every one in the place almost to death by dancing every other dance with her husband, Rudy Cameron. Jack Dillon and his wife were tripping the light fantastic, and their little boy was allowed to stay up into 10 o'clock to watch. Lila Lee had on a frock of apple green that may have been immoral, but looked charming. With her was a good looking young millionaire to whom her engagement is often reported. They did sit out quite a few dances, they did.

Mae Busch, startlingly vampish in black velvet, Marguerite de la Motte, May Allison--and we all went over to the drug store on the opposite corner and had an ice cream soda between dances.

I tell you, it's a wild and wearing life.

Yet there, in the very heart of this place which some parasites of the industry, seeking free advertising at the expense of the hand that fed them at least scrappily for some time say should be abolished, live and work some of the greatest literary geniuses of the age.

Here, with alleged vice rampant about them, with wild women and dissolute men shrieking up and down the boulevard, so they tell us, here Gertrude Atherton wrote much of her latest novel. Here Sir Gilbert Parker lived and worked. Somerset Maugham had a little quiet room under the eaves where he conceived and executed some of his brilliant comedies. Elinor Glyn completed her last book in her second floor suite. Rita Welman, Mary Roberts Rinehart, Rupert Hughes--all have lived in the Hollywood Hotel. I have visited most of

them there, seen them hard at work.

Must we forget that sort of thing utterly when we think of Hollywood?

I went to a dinner party at Charlie Chaplin's house on the hill not very long ago. It was a real movie dinner party--most all celebrities: Charlie, Sam Goldwyn, Gouverneur Morris, Rupert Hughes and his wife and May Allison and Claire Windsor.

Do you know what occupied three hours at the dinner table?

I dare say some of our imported scribes would lead you to believe that they carried in the cocaine on the tea tables, that we spent the time in ribald jest and risque tales that would have made Boccaccio blush to hear.

Well as a matter of fact, Rupert Hughes and Charlie Chaplin launched at once into the most interesting theological discussion I have ever heard--Mr. Hughes, with his immense fund of information and historical statistics; Chaplin with his wonderful intellectual conception and imaginative impressionability. They discussed religion for three hours while we all listened spellbound.

If you want to be fair about Hollywood, will you remember all this?

While I was in New York I went to Delmonico's for supper after the theater with some friends. Upstairs, in a private banquet room, a group of railroad officials were having a party. There were about twenty of them, and they may have had doughnuts in their pockets, but I don't think so. Anyway, the pockets bulged considerably. During the evening they had a lot of girls--dancing girls--up there and the noise was certainly indicative of a good, rousing old time. Wine, women and song seemed to be the order of the evening.

If anybody pulled a party like that in the Hollywood Hotel or in any cafe in Hollywood the place would be raided, the neighbors would call out the fire department and the whole town would be shocked to death for a week.

Polly Frederick is another screen star who gives a lot of parties. Last one she gave I lost \$3.75. It was a terrible reckless evening for me. I mean, that's a lot to lose at penny ante poker, isn't it? Polly does like the wild life. After working all day, getting up at 6 in the morning for her ride through the hills, she's just all ready to carouse all night. And she does

like a little poker game.

For years Mary Pickford has lived the life of a recluse. There was nothing else for her to do.

If the film people mingle with others, if they go into society, they can't possibly feel comfortable. I went to a reception one night with Bebe Daniels--it was a wedding reception and the bride was an old friend of ours. We had known her in our schooldays before we became residents of the horrible center of vice, Hollywood.

Poor old Bebe. She was stared at, talked about, eyed, talked to in the most insane manner I have ever heard in my life, until at last she grasped my arm and gasped, "For heaven's sake, let's get out of this. I feel like an animal in the Zoo."

Yet those were good, kindly, well-behaved folk of the social strata.

There is another thing that we face in Hollywood. The hangers-on. And they are not all poor ones, by any means. The worst place in Hollywood last year belonged to the good-fellow husband of a rich woman, whose place offered every inducement possible for the entertainment of guests. Swimming pool, motors, tennis court, servants, costly food and plenty of good liquor were thrown out as bait for the film folk, with whom it was his chief ambition in life to consort. A group of rich young men, attracted by the pretty faces of the film stars, hang about on the fringe of the colony, delighting to mingle on free and friendly terms with the possessors of such famous names and by their actions bringing more censure--and more justified censure--on the industry than any of those who get a pay envelope across the studio counter.

* * * * *

February 22, 1922

Adela Rogers St. Johns

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

My mental picture of Hollywood is getting to the place where I have to sit down and do a lot of remembering to be sure I'm right.

When I read about the "wild tribe of Hollywood" now under investigation I

begin to sing South Sea Island lullabies and see exotic panoramas of huts in the wilderness, of groups of people living in cellar dives which the sunlight never reaches, of fantastic settings like those I used to see in the old San Francisco Chinatown.

And I say to myself: "Hollywood, my Hollywood; can you have been deceiving me all these years? Under that bright and charming exterior that I know so well, in that soul that I've been on such darn good terms with for all these years--are you really a den of iniquity?"

Then I positively get the giggles.

Why, it'll probably surprise you a lot to know that we actually have homes in Hollywood. Real homes. Where people live, with their kids, and have problems about heating the house, and keeping the lawn watered, and getting a cook that will stay.

Florence Vidor, for instance, has a new home that would deceive the most hectic of our smut-seeking sleuths. You'd never dream it was anything but the charmingly kept, tasteful home of a southern lady. Last time I was there Florence and I were sitting in her sitting-room, satisfying our evil passions with some after-luncheon mints. Mammy, the Negro servant whom Florence brought from her home in Texas, had little Suzanne Vidor, Florence's 4-year-old daughter, down in the kitchen with hear, and when she went out to answer the telephone she told Suzanne to watch the coffee.

In a minute Suzanne came dashing in and called at the top of her small voice, "Mamma, mamma, come quick. The coffee is frowning up all over the stove."

Just tell that one the next time you want to give your friends an example of the risque jokes we tell in Hollywood.

I don't think you should visit the Milton Sills home, however. It's pretty trying work, talking with Mr. and Mrs. Sills. Maybe it wouldn't exactly shock you, but it would give you an awful mental kick.

They talk about the effect climate has had on the development of different races of the earth and the age of the various astronomical suns as judged by the differences in their color. Of course, Milton used to be a

college professor, and that may have saved him from the vile clutches of the Hollywood monster.

As to the Charles Rays--I'll hardly be able to convince you about them.

The Rays' home is quite the most beautiful place I have been in. They spent more than two years selecting the furniture and the wall drapes and the works of art that fill it. They own some delicious pictures and Mrs. Ray spends about half her time between her voice and piano lessons--pretty swift pace she keeps up, too. Their butler is the best I've ever seen, in or out of the Sunday supplements. Mrs. Ray also is a very fine needle-woman.

Really, being in the movies, I don't see how they move in the social set they do out there. They are quite "in" now--Mrs. Ray is on the committee of the Children's Hospital, with all the blue blood of the town. Gets her name in the society column and everything.

Of course, when I think of Lois Wilson I have just one desire in the world. To see her face when she reads what kind of a place she really lives in. Only, of course, Lois won't know what it's all about.

Last summer Lois' mother and sister went over to Catalina for a few weeks and left Lois and her father alone in their white plaster house in the foothills. Lois and her father did their own cooking and used to be real devilish and toss a coin to see who washed the dishes. I went up one morning to get Lois to go down to the beach and go swimming with me. All over the house--pasted on Lois' dressing mirror, on the lamp shade, on the front door, pinned on the pillow covers--was this legend in bold, black type. "Lois, don't forget to feed the bird."

So the worst you can say about Lois is that maybe she hasn't a very good memory.

The Jack Holts are another family that--really, all joking aside, I don't believe in any town, anywhere in the country, you'll find another home like the Holts. They have three kiddies, and honestly (I hope they won't see this story) Jack just literally bores you to death telling you about them.

I think they must have meant Jack Holt when they told that story about somebody liking to play horse. Because Jack uses the big blue drawing room

chiefly as a race course around which he crawls on all fours with Jack Jr.--who's getting close to his third birthday--on his back.

William de Mille and his wife, Ann--the daughter, by the way of Single Tax George--live in a big old brown house, all books and a bit shabby inside. Once a week William has a class of devotees who come up there for a lecture on political economy, and Bill's idea of the way to spend all the money he makes in the movies is to conduct private political and advertising campaigns for the legislative movements he believes in. Last year he spent a small fortune advocating one such bill.

Oh yes--I mustn't forget this one.

Conrad Nagel is an usher in one of the biggest churches on Hollywood boulevard. You can see him there twice on Sunday, wearing a frock coat and a sweet smile. The Nagels have a baby daughter a year and a half old.

Of course they can return a terrible indictment against Lila Lee--and Bebe Daniels. Lila lives at home with her mother and sister, Bebe has just bought a big house in the exclusive West Adams district, where she reigns over a bevy of grandmother, mother, aunts and such like.

Psychology

Adela Rogers St. Johns also wrote a series of short "fiction" stories about Hollywood. As she later stated in her autobiography, THE HONEYCOMB: "...most of them were built on fact and often became fiction only to avoid libel laws...In some instances it was the only way in which you could print the truth." The following short story, "Dolls," was a fictionalized version of the relationship between Mary Miles Minter and her mother, Charlotte Shelby; and of the romance between Minter and Marshall Neilan. Although the incidents are fiction, the characterizations (at least in the first three chapters) are probably extremely accurate.

* * * * *

July 1923

Dolls

Hollywood, in spite of its youth, has its traditions. Among them is the tradition of Mignon Variel's dolls. Also, the kingdom of the silversheet has its anniversaries and its historical dates.

Some barbed tongue had once remarked that Mignon's sixteenth birthday might well be called Hollywood's national holiday.

Unkind, no doubt, but Hollywood was a little weary of celebrating Mignon's birthday. She had been younger and now she was older than sixteen. But somehow Mignon's birthday had been cleverly surrounded with a halo--as though it were merely symbolic.

It had grown to mean sweet sixteen as the Fourth of July means firecrackers.

And Hollywood was a little weary, too, of the pictures of Mignon that flooded forth afterwards--of Mignon, with her curls falling in a golden shower, one toe turned in, and the biggest new doll in her arms.

As a matter of fact, on the drizzly morning when she sat in the office of Sam Hartfeltz, producer, and toyed with the silken ears of a yappy Pekingese, Mignon Variel was nineteen.

But even off the screen she looked the traditional sixteen that clung to her. Younger, perhaps.

It wasn't only the tiny feet, in flat-heeled, round-toed slippers. Nor the little fur cap, pulled over the long curls that reached below her waist. Nor the undeveloped curve of her young breast beneath the white crepe frock.

One of Hartzeltz's battery of lawyers, sitting opposite her, discovered that there was something lacking in her face that even adolescence brings.

And he decided that though it was the face of a child, somehow it wasn't childish.

It took him some time to place the look, and then he remembered that he had seen it in the faces of children who are raised in fashionable hotels.

Of course. Of course.

The skin was so lovely, the white of magnolia blossoms, as though grease paint had protected it from the sting of the wind and the kiss of the sun.

The young lawyer thought of the girls he knew, who rollicked on golf courses or tennis courts, until the wild roses peeped through their tanned young cheeks, and he heaved a quick sigh.

Of course Mignon Variel had made a great deal of money and won a great deal of fame, but just the same he was glad his own tousle-headed youngsters were just--just kids.

There were six people seated about the big, polished mahogany table.

Mignon, bored and a little cross. Fidgeting impatiently.

Mignon's mother.

Sam Hartfeltz. Two lawyers. A stenographer.

It was perhaps noteworthy that both lawyers were employed by Mr. Hartfeltz.

Ma Variel needed no lawyer for contracts.

It was, indeed, another tradition in Hollywood that Ma Variel was a match, single-handed, for anyone in the business.

Contracts were an old--a very old--story to Ma Variel.

Ever since Mignon, at the age of four, in gauzy skirts not more than five inches long and a pair of immense butterfly wings attached to her dimpled baby shoulders, had danced herself into the headline position on a vaudeville bill, Ma Variel--flushed and cold-eyed, emotional but immovable--had signed her name to many an amazing document.

For Baby Mignon's service had been in demand.

She put down the jeweled lorgnon and laughed indulgently.

"Not so bad, Sam," she said purringly. "Not so bad at all. Though 'tis a waste of time, beginning with such stuff as that on me. Marriage and morality clauses for a baby like my Mignon! Seems to me you and I have known each other pretty near long enough to start right down to cases. The child cannot do eight pictures a year. She's still growing and 'tis too great a strain on the delicate strength of her. No, we'll start by striking that out. Six pictures,

now, that's not beyond reason."

"But--" began Mr. Hartfeltz.

"Sammy, what good is it to you to have her overtax herself? The lamb shall have some time to play, so she shall. No one can ever say that Gertrude Variel sacrificed her lambkin for money or for fame. Six pictures a year, Sam. That's plenty."

"All right," said Hartfeltz slowly. "I suppose I'll have to agree to that. Though Mignon looks strong as a horse. And the program does need more pictures. Well, then, we'll say six pictures a year--thirty thousand dollars a picture. That's too much, but Mignon's been with us a long time and we want to be fair with her."

Ma Variel leaned back in the blue velvet chair and folded her pretty, fat hands in her lap.

Her heavy round face under the elegance of her street hat took on a slow, playful smile.

"Nobody knows better than I do that you want to be fair, Sam," she said pleasantly. "that's the only reason I don't laugh in your face for saying thirty thousand a picture to Mignon Variel. Four years now Mignon's been making Hart pictures. Naturally, myself, I don't want to see her leave. I've got some sentiment, I hope. Too much, indeed, for my own good."

Sam Hartfeltz lighted a cigarette nervously and pushed the box across to Ma Variel, who took one sadly.

A little pause, tense and delicate, fell as the smoke wreathed upward.

"Oh, mamma, do hurry up!" said Mignon petulantly. "I'm getting so tired."

Ma Variel merely glanced at her.

"Well," said Sam Hartfeltz, flushing with the embarrassment that usually overpowered him in moments like this. "I guess she won't need to wait any longer now, Gertrude. We're practically through. Six pictures a year for three years. Thirty thousand dollars a picture. I'll have the lawyers here draw it up and you can come in again tomorrow and sign it."

"Sammy, I'm surprised at you," said Ma Variel, pleasantly, but a tinge of crimson had begun to grow in the creases of her double chin. "I am. You know

I'm only a pore lone woman against all you smart men. But it's like a lioness with her cub, Sammy, when you try to put something across on my baby. I've given up my whole life without one other thought but her, and you know thirty thousand dollars isn't enough."

"It's my top figure," said Hartfeltz, with sudden coldness.

Ma Variel gathered up her sable cloak and wrapped it about her plump shoulders.

"All right, Sam," she said, as coldly.

Mignon jumped up and started for the door, her round young figure in its short Persian lamb coat looking very slender and immature beside her mother's over-groomed bulk.

As Ma Variel put a steady hand on the door knob, Sam spoke again. "Where are you going, Gertrude?"

Ma Variel did not turn.

"I'm going to see Morris of the United and tell him what a fool I've been, letting sentiment stand in the way of my child's future. I'm going to tell him I'll take the fair, decent proposition he, a perfect stranger, made to me, when my best friends try--"

"Come back a minute, Gertrude," said Hartfeltz despondently. "Don't always be going off half-cocked like that."

She turned in the doorway, poised like a large and angry seal.

"I'm no good at dickering, Sammy," she said. "I wouldn't demean myself to do it. I know what's right and I try to do what's right, that's all."

"Well, what'd you think is right?"

"Forty thousand a picture for six pictures the first year. Fifty thousand a picture the second year. And sixty the third year. And me to have the last say on stories."

"Great guns!" said Hartfeltz.

"And at that, for old times' sake, I'm putting it under what Morris offers me."

"Come back and sit down," said the man behind the table wearily. "It's too much. It's a hold-up. It's murder. But I suppose I got to do it."

For the first time a dark wreath began to blaze in Ma Variel's eyes. The slow flush of crimson crept up to her cheeks.

"What do you mean, it's a hold-up?" she said, coming to stand facing him, her fist clenched on the table. "Don't play me for a fool, Sam Hartfeltz. I'm only a poor lone woman with nothing in the world but my child, but I'm no fool. Who carried most of your rotten old program last year? Ask any exhibitor. Why do they take such stuff as you force down their throats from Von Merchen and such dubs as Dorothy Vogel and Elise Devereaux? Because they have to take 'em to get Mignon Variel, that's why.

"Don't every exhibitor in the country tell me my Mignon is the whip of the Hart program? And do you think I was traipsing all of the United States in the summer time at my age to amuse myself? I guess not. I've had a hard life, and the way I like to amuse myself is to get off my corsets and my shoes and watch Mignon playing with her dolls. No, I was finding out just what I needed to know. Did you have any other picture clean up like 'The Rose of Avenue A'? Think I don't know it netted three hundred and fifty thousand dollars the first six months?

"Who's the only star on your lot hasn't had a flop this year? Mignon Variel. And what's more, don't she give your productions a good name with the church people and the censors, such a dear, sweet, innocent baby as she is? Shy, it's worth every cent you pay her to know you've got one girl isn't going to be named as corespondent in a divorce case or have her nightie found in some man's bedroom about the time you release a million dollar picture of her as Saint Cecilia. Don't kid me, Sammy. What did all the exhibitors in Texas tell me?--my baby's the biggest drawing card they've ever had, that's what. Nobody else is so beautiful and young and such an actress--that's what they told me. And exhibitors only see through the box office window, I guess I know that. And you've got the nerve, after all the money she's made for you--"

Tears were streaming down her cheeks now.

"Instantly Mignon was at her side, arms about the shoulders heaving in their tight frock. "Mama, don't!" she pleaded. "Oh, mamma please don't cry! You're a hateful old thing," she flung at the dark, troubled man. "You made my

mamma cry, after all we've done for you, too. I don't want to work for you any more. I can work any place. I'm going to have my own company, that's what I'm going to have."

Ma Variel's sobbing stopped abruptly. "Don't talk like that, Mignon," she said. "That's no way for a little girl to talk. Well, Sammy?"

"It's all right," said Hartfeltz. "Only--that story thing. Honestly, Gertrude, you got to leave the stories up to the scenario department. I had more trouble last year than Congress, trying to fix up rows between you and the scenario department. More fuss it was than all the rest of the studio to run put together. Please now, don't start that all over again. I tell you, I give you a bonus this year if you let the scenario department pick out the stories for Mignon."

With a small square of colored lawn, Ma Variel wiped the tears from her cheeks. When her dignity and calm were restored, she said impressively: "Your whole company hasn't got money enough to pay me such a bonus. Who found 'Sweet Violets' and 'Springtime,' I want to know! Me, or your scenario department? Who got 'Nurse Adeline,' eh? Me. When they want to put her in stories any grown-up star could do."

Sam Hartfeltz pulled himself up by his boot straps for his next remark.

"But Gertrude," he said, "Mignon ain't so young as she was. She's getting a little bit heavy around the hips that she should play little girls any more. I don't ask she should do sex stuff. But you know the critics ain't so gentle in saying she should stop being so childish all the time. Nice, clean stories, yes. But Mignon is going on twenty now. She can't play with dolls all her life."

For the first time Mignon's self-satisfied little face broke into sudden interest. "Oh yes. I'm awfully tired of playing little girls. I'm nearly twenty and I'd like to do grown-up parts."

Sammy Hartfeltz was not a brave man. He was only a very good showman with a strange gift of knowing the mind of the public. He had made a vast fortune, but the shy delicacy and self-consciousness of his downtrodden youth still clung to him.

But even had he been a brave man, a very brave man, he must have quailed before the fury that flamed into Ma Variel's face.

The crimson had gone purple. Her temples pulsed with it.

She screamed at him, and Mignon shrank back against the door, her young face suddenly old and wizened, like a child's at the sight of a lash it has felt across its tender body.

"Don't you go putting ideas like that into my child's mind! There's time enough in the years ahead for her to grow up. She's only a baby yet. A little baby. Why, she doesn't look a day older than she did when she played 'The Flower Girl' in London and the King and Queen gave her a decoration.

"That's the way the public wants her. That's the way I'm going to keep her, and don't you forget it. At home, don't she still play with her dolls? Don't you dare talk to me about how she should grow up. And putting in marriage and morality clauses!"

"She might get married sometime," said Hartfeltz desperately. "And for morality, what can you tell? You think everybody else is a fool, Gertrude. What about Jack Garford, eh?"

The purple faded to gray, to white.

"You've got the nerve to throw that up to me now. It wasn't terrible enough that a degenerate dog of an actor tried to compromise my baby, just for blackmail because he heard I'd stored away a little money, but you've got to throw it up to me now. The saints help me!"

"All right," said Sam Hartfeltz, "all right. You draw up the contract and bring it down here tomorrow and I'll sign it."

II

Mignon had never noticed Mickey O'Toole at all until the morning that she caught him, in the wide corridors of the dressing room building, giving an imitation of her usual morning entrance on to the set.

He was, to her, merely another leading man. And she hated all leading men.

Of course, Mignon had no business in the dressing room building.

She had her own elaborate bungalow. But she had been up to the wardrobe to get her costume for the new sequence and she had mistaken the turn.

It was a very good imitation.

Mickey had a genius for that sort of thing. Hollywood rated him as one of her prize entertainers.

Aside from that, he was a handsome youngster, with dark red hair that photographed black, a quizzical mouth and inquisitive, impudent eyes.

Daring was written in the very poise of his head.

As Mignon came round the corner, he was holding a large audience utterly convulsed as he enacted the scene which took place each morning when Mignon arrived on the set for work.

He needed only one actor--himself--to present the case complete.

Mignon herself, with the dogs, Ma Variel, carrying a doll under her arm. The frantic, overloaded maid. The uniformed chauffeur, carrying a hamper of flowers. The fussy, efficient secretary.

With the merest intonation, expression, gesture, he put before them the entourage, in all its absurdity and self-importance.

Then Depew, the director--toadying suavely and diplomatically.

The whispering chorus of script holders and musicians and actors and publicity men and writers, all breathing a murmured, awe-struck welcome. Their bowing, smirking, "Good morning, little lady" or "How's our sweet little star today?" and "You're as fresh as a rosebud, Miss Variel."

Very well done.

The very essence of biting, devastating, brutal caricature.

Mignon's heart stopped beating. Fear, anger, a sickening nausea she could not understand.

It was his imitation of herself that drove her back into the cold shadow of the stone walls, stunned into silence.

That stolid hauteur. That obnoxious self-satisfaction. That simpering, nasty-nice egotism.

Horrible. Horrible.

Her brain, that had never operated outside a set groove, like a chipmunk on treadmill, began to beat frantically at her temples, her forehead.

These were people. People like herself. Mickey O'Toole, whom she had despised--he had opinions about her. They all had thoughts about her! Independent thoughts.

Like flashing pictures trickled into her brain. Like the small darting pains that follow a second after the bullet.

Her isolation. The giggles of the other girls. The way the publicity department had to be clubbed into working for her. Her lights always missing and the sullen expression on the faces of the electricians when they were discovered on some other set. Her friendlessness. Other girls, arm in arm. Lunching in each other's dressing rooms.

Oh, they made fun of her! Of her and her dolls.

She had told mamma that. She had. She had begged not to have her picture taken with her dolls any more.

How she hated dolls! What could she do? Mamma--mamma--mamma--

Her thoughts would go no further. Mamma had always thought for her, decided for her. Protected her. Why, she had actually believed the whole studio adored her greatness from afar.

Ma Variel lacked many things. But courage she had.

And her only child discovered in that moment that some of it had been bequeathed to her.

Mignon sucked in her lower lip and walked deliberately around the corner into the wide corridor where Mickey O'Toole played to his audience.

In the checked gingham rompers and the short socks, with her curls falling about her and a big rag doll tucked under her arm, she did look absurdly like a child.

Only a slight thickening of the tissues of her whole body and a lack of perfect suppleness, which only an artist might have noted, betrayed her.

"How dare you?" she cried violently, and was furious that her voice failed her. "Oh, how dare you make fun of me, you--you horrid--"

Mickey O'Toole's eyes narrowed. It was not a fortunate beginning. The

O'Tooles were rather apt to dare.

"Good morning, Miss Variel," he said, a new grin leaped into his eyes, with sheer joy that such a situation should develop for his amusement. "I didn't intend that you should be part of my audience for this little impromptu performance. 'Tis hardly worthy of your attention. Give me time, and I'll try to give you something a bit more--artistic."

"I shall tell Mr. Hartfeltz about your impertinence at once, and you'll be dismissed and never work on this lot again," said Mignon, her eyes hot and her lips cold.

"Can you imagine that!" said Mickey O'Toole. "Well, 'tis a comfort to know I can always go back to digging ditches. But--it'll cost him a pretty penny to turn me out now and remake half a picture. How he will weep over that!"

The audience had faded, reluctantly.

It was all very well for Mickey.

Mickey had no sense anyway.

But they knew something of Ma Variel's power and temper.

"I suppose you think you were very funny," said Mignon. It was plain now that she was too inexperienced, too untrained, to be a worthy opponent. "But I think you're just hateful--hateful."

Partly from anger, partly from sheer terror at the revelation dawning upon her, Mignon sank down, cross-legged, upon the stone floor, buried her head on the rag doll and began to cry.

Her curls caught the morning sun and shone like the shimmer of autumn wheat fields. Her clutching fingers closed about the toes of her futile little Mary Janes.

"Oh now, don't do that," said Mickey O'Toole, and quite naturally went and sat down on the floor beside her. "I say, don't cry. There isn't anything to cry about, really. Here, stop it! I'd no idea you could cry like that."

Mignon raised her head and looked him straight in the eyes.

"Why do you hate me so?" she asked. "Why does everybody hate me so? Oh dear. Oh dear."

"Bless your heart, you silly little thing," said Mickey O'Toole. "I don't bother to hate you. I just think you make an awful idiot of yourself most of the time."

Mignon gasped.

"Does everybody think that?"

"Well, I dare say there are lots of people don't think about you at all. But a lot of them think that."

"Why?"

Mickey looked long into her eyes. They were dumb eyes, but they were very pitiful. Almost like the eyes of a puppy who has been kicked and doesn't know why.

"Well," he said at last, "I dare say it's on account of your mother. She's not popular. Maybe it's only because she loves you, but she certainly tramples on everybody. You're not so bad, if you'd only go about your business. You can act. But you're not the most important thing on this planet by a darn sight. To be frank with you, my dear, since we're talking man to man, you're an upstage, conceited, dumb little brat. That's what you are."

Mignon was nodding her head, in exact imitation of her biggest French doll.

"I-I didn't know," she said.

"Think a minute," said Mickey. "What's the good of going around saying your mama doesn't allow you to associate with picture people? Your mother may be a most estimable lady, but she used to be a second-rate dancer on the small time vaudeville and everybody knows it. They'd all forget it quick enough if she didn't act like she was Queen Victoria reincarnated. What's the good of cutting poor little tramps that never had a chance or a break of luck, but who've got more brains and more heart and more honest woman emotion than you'll ever have? What's the use of making it so hard for everybody? *I* don't care, but most leading men that play in a picture with you get sort of tired of having their left hand ear photographed exclusively. And you know, Mignon, you're a big girl now. It's such a lot of apple sauce for you to pretend you think storks bring the babies. It is really. How old are you?"

"Sixteen."

"Behave, behave! How old are you?"

"Most twenty."

"Can you imagine that? What's there to be so ashamed of about being twenty that you try to hide it all the time? Oh, what a lot of apple sauce!"

Mignon trembled a little. "I guess," she began confusedly, "I guess you don't know what it's like to be--be an infant prodigy. With mamma. Oh, I was treated fine. But--it's sort of a funny way to grow up. It--makes you different from other people. When you've never done anything in your whole life just--because you wanted to--but always for the people watching you. It--it's funny."

She stammered and wiped the tears away with the skirt of the rag doll. "I remember once we were in a town near a park. I ran away to the park and played with the children." Her eyes grew wistful. "They didn't like me either because I didn't know how to play. One little boy pushed me down and cut my lip. But I didn't care. That was the only time I ever played with children."

"Mothers are--fine--but I guess it's funny I always thought I'd like a papa. Maybe he'd have carried me on his shoulder and--made me a coaster. You get awful tired of just dolls."

She stopped, inarticulate. Ashamed of her speech. Unable to describe or explain any more of the old hurt.

But Mickey O'Toole of the Irish imagination looked into her round face and her round, wet eyes and saw all that she could never tell.

The endless procession of hotels that were never home. The gushing throngs of admirers. The little dark dressing rooms, on days when the shouts of youngsters rang from every dusty hillside and every wave-washed beach.

The glare of the footlights in tired baby eyes.

He saw a lonely, puzzled baby, all by herself in the Terrible Land of Grown-ups. He could almost hear the precise flavor of her speech and the horror of her "cute sayings."

Robbed of her mud pies. Robbed of her broken window panes and her bruised, mother-kissed knees. Robbed of that sacred privacy of childhood.

But oh, most of all, beyond everything else in the world, robbed of her playmates. Of those other children who alone could have answered the incessant cry of her lonely baby heart.

Poor little mummer! Like all those other poor little mummers he saw daily about the studios, precocious, too well behaved, unchildlike little creatures, doing their tricks like monkeys on a hand organ.

He thought of Baby Mignon, flapping her tiny wings like a pink butterfly on a wheel, and then he thought of that gentle Friend who understood better than all others the delicacy of the child soul, and who said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of Heaven." And his heart came into his throat.

And she had been bound to serve out years in the slavery of this false childhood. She couldn't even grow up. She had been wrapped and pinched into that nightmare of stage childhood, as the feet of Chinese maidens are wrapped and pinched to stunt their growth.

Unconsciously he put his arm about her, and quite as unconsciously she relaxed against him. Gently he began to sway back and forth, as though he were rocking a baby to sleep, patting her shoulder with regular, tender pats.

"There, there," he said softly. "I understand. Don't you worry."

"Mickey," said Mignon Variel softly, "what ought I to do first, do you think?"

"Let's throw this away," said Mickey O'Toole. And he tossed the rag doll over the cement wall.

III

Mignon crept noiselessly up the heavily padded staircase.

She was trembling with fright, yet she was warm with exultation.

Only a sense of pride for Mickey helped her to bite back a scream as the light flashed on in the upper hallway.

Rigid, ominous, Ma Variel stood there.

"Where have you been?"

Mignon tried to speak; but her lips trembled so that she could not.

"Where have you been?" her mother repeated.

Neither moved for a long minute.

Then the older woman put out a hand. "Come here Mignon."

Like a frightened child, Mignon Variel, the greatest of screen ingenues, crept up the few remaining steps.

"It's eleven o'clock," said the harsh, choked voice. "Where have you been?"

Quite against her will, Mignon began to sob. "I haven't been anywhere," she said. "I haven't done anything I shouldn't. I just went out to dinner with Mickey, that's all, and we danced. We went to the Ambassador. It was all right, mamma."

"Why didn't you tell me?"

"Because--oh, mamma, you know you wouldn't have let me go alone! I'm--oh, mamma, I love you. But I wanted to go out alone, just once, like other girls. Just once--"

"So that's what he's put into your head, is it? This guttersnipe. This shanty-Irish blackguard. This bleary-eyed seducer of babies. You're easy prey, you and your fortune, for such a scheming vampire as him. But he's forgotten--what is it they call me in Hollywood?--Ma Variel. He's forgotten Ma Variel."

Suddenly her face hardened. One hand reached out and clutched at the mass of golden curls, coiled with exquisite beauty on top of the round young head. Bound there with a thin silver ribbon.

And this time the girl screamed, aloud, as that ruthless, heavy hand tore down the glistening mop and let the famous curls fall about the shrinking shoulders.

"So--putting your hair on top of your head. Your pretty hair that makes you look so young and sweet and different. I've spoiled you, Mignon. I've spoiled you. But you're all I've got in the world, and you'll have to reckon with me if you start this sort of thing. You and this low, common actor you've chosen to disgrace yourself with. Come in here."

Mignon fought for self-control as she followed the heavy-moving figure

into the big, luxurious bedroom, where a fire burned on the white tile hearth.

"Take that dress off and go to bed," said her mother, pouring milk into a tiny electric kettle, "and have your hot milk and be asleep before midnight, like a young girl should."

"Please, mamma, I haven't disgraced myself. It's only that I wanted to be like other girls--just once--and have a good time--"

"Like other girls, eh? Like these Hollywood trollops? Chasing around with this man and that and getting common and losing their looks and ruining their reputations. You don't know what a girl's up against that does that, my dear. You just stop and think a minute and you'll know how fortunate you've been all these years with a mother to fight every battle for you and stand in front of you and think for you. I've had some hard times, my fine young lady, and if I'm hard now, that's the reason. What do you know about the world? And your Mickey would be a fine one to depend on--"

"Oh, mamma, please don't say anything against Mickey! He's been so dear and kind--"

Ma Variel towered above her as she slipped trembling between the silken, scented sheets. Towered impressive and terrible.

"Kind, has he? I don't doubt it. As he's been kind to every cheap extra girl and low-down female on the lot. Common, that's what he is. A drunkard. A gutter drunkard. Mixed up with all kinds of cheap women. What d'you know about men, you poor, innocent baby? Answer me that. It takes years and hard knocks to teach a woman most of them are rotten. A clowning, simpering, worthless puppy, that's what he is."

She held out the glass of hot milk. Mignon took it and raised it to her lips. Part of it spilled on the rare lace of her gown and on the brocaded satin coverlet.

With steady hands, Ma Variel wiped the drops away.

"But, mamma, everybody likes Mickey."

"Everybody? The rifraff and kittle-cattle of Hollywood. Why shouldn't they like him? He's one of 'em. He drinks with them and carouses with them and makes love to them, sure enough. You, that I've kept above all that--is that

what you want, Mignon?"

"I--no, no. But mamma, that isn't all there is. There's some decent young fun for a girl, isn't there. Not always to be cooped up, nor posing. Nor playing with dolls. I want a little freedom."

"Freedom? To do what? Ruin yourself. You listen to me. Ever since the day they gave you to me in the hospital, a little, wizened, ugly brat, squalling with fear and hunger, you've been all I had in the world. I hated your father because he made a fool of me just like this man would make a fool out of you. I hated him because he run off and left you--not because he left me. For twenty years I've fought and thought and forgot I was anything but your mother. For twenty years I haven't had a feeling or a thought outside of you, and I've kept you a sweet, pure child and now--"

Both women were sobbing, but the mother went on in an abysmal tide of emotion. "Now you want to leave me. You go off with the first young snip that comes along. You forget everything I've done and sacrificed for you. You deceive me, your mother, for a man you don't know anything about. That you never saw until a month ago. You want to ruin the career I've built up for you and tarnish the good name I've kept for you in this rotten business. You want to give him the money I've schemed and lied and fought for you to earn. My goodness, Mignon, haven't you got everything in the world a girl could want? Don't I give you everything?"

Ma Variel, in a tenderness that was cyclonic, swept the trembling child to her breast.

As the passion of all the ages lay in her quivering, tear-stained, fear-ridden face. The passion of motherhood and of fatherhood; of possession and of service; of worship and of jealousy. The passion of a woman to whom a child has been husband and lover and work and reward and religion for many years.

A fierceness of possession swept her, that would have taken this child back into her very blood before giving her to another.

The blanket of it fell, smothering, on Mignon Variel. The thrill of Mickey's presence vanished. The inspiration of her new self faded.

The other cone of that passionate, selfish, material mother-love

suffocated her.

She sobbed, once or twice. Nodded wearily. And fell into an exhausted sleep of childhood.

Her mother sat there, hour after hour, holding her against her breast in ecstasy.

IV

On a certain day in June when the oranges hung on the velvet trees like colored balls on a Christmas tree and the fields were a mass of yellow mustard bloom, Mickey O'Toole and Mignon Variel went to Santa Ana and were married.

For weeks the battle had raged.

Hollywood, amazed and amused, had watched with mingled chuckles and thrills.

Each step of the drama had been known to the eager colony.

They knew, for instance, the exact hour when Ma Variel ordered Mickey from the house and forbade him ever to return.

They knew, almost to a word, what took place in Sam Hartfeltz's office when she blacklisted him at the Hart studio, and every other studio where she or Hartfeltz had any influence.

But public sympathy was with Mickey. There were a number of people in Hollywood who had old scores against Ma Variel. Mickey didn't lack influential supporters.

They knew, too, about the time that Mignon actually climbed out of an upstairs window in the dead of night for a stolen motor ride. And some versions declared that she had left a cleverly conceived dummy in her bed.

There were rumors of terrific scenes in the Variel household. There were rumors that Mignon had actually defied her mother on occasion--but not for long. And that in the end Ma Variel had turned Mignon over her knee and spanked her soundly with a hairbrush.

Here and there it was said that Ma Variel had stooped to the deepest trickery to compromise and ruin Mickey.

The whole staff knew, and nearly burst with excitement, when Red--an adventurous and impertinent prop boy--smuggled notes to Mignon under her mother's very nose.

Altogether, Hollywood hadn't had so much fun in a long time.

When Mignon arrived at the studio, under guard, and was marched to her dressing bungalow entirely surrounded by watchful eyes, they decided it was almost as good as one of the old time romances, when kings hid haughty princesses within impregnable towers to keep them from the arms of low-born lovers.

After all, in her way Mignon was a princess.

The wedding was a surprise to no one.

Only the details were exciting.

And exciting they certainly were.

After days of failure, it was understood that Mickey had thought out the plan.

Mignon was working on a big county fair set. And, after losing herself among the vast throng of extra people, she had slipped through a side gate into a waiting touring car, and made a wild dash for Santa Ana, where Mickey awaited her.

And so Mignon Variel, who earned a quarter of a million dollars a year and whose face was known in every land under the sun, was married by a justice of the peace, in a county courthouse, in a calico dress and a straw hat with a hole in it. And while the sandals hid her toes, they could not hide the bare whiteness of her ankles.

She still wore, too, the grease paint of her screen make-up.

In two hours she was back on the set.

And because there had been another figure mingling with the extras, in a calico dress and a straw hat, Ma Variel hadn't missed her.

The secret held for three days.

And then it broke with a dull thud in the morning papers. Eight-column headlines, myriad photographs and much elegant description.

Fortunately Mickey, who was not sleeping well, awoke in the dawn and read

his paper early. So that just as Mignon, dizzy from the shock of that screaming black type, was staring into her mother's eyes across untouched grapefruit, the bridegroom walked in.

"Hello, mother," said young Mickey O'Toole with a grin. " 'Tis not the way I would have announced it to you, but you've got Mignon so scared of you there was no other way without frightening her to death."

Ma Variel did not look well in negligee and she knew it. If it takes ten generations to make a man look like a gentleman in evening clothes, it takes twenty to make a woman look like a lady in a pink negligee.

"Get out of my house," she said briefly. "Quick. And don't ever come back or I'll set the dogs on you."

"All right, dear," said Mickey. "Come on Mignon. The car's outside."

Mignon half rose. "Sit down," said her mother. "You get out of this house and let my daughter alone."

"Oh no," said Mickey. "Can't do that. Sorry. She happens to be my wife, you know. And you remember that the jolly old Bible says you should forsake your father and mother and cleave unto your husband. Mignon, come here."

His tone was quiet, but for the first time an actual panic seized Ma Variel, for it was as cool and steady and purposeful as it was quiet.

Mignon went to his side. "Please, mamma--" she began.

"Never mind, dear," said her husband. "You two women have had enough chance at managing this thing. What you actually need is a man in the family. I let you come back once, now I'm going to run it my way. Mother, let me tell you a few things. Mignon is married to me. She's of marrying age and it's legal. And the law is quite squiffy about people trying to separate husbands and wives. It is, really. In fact, they do all sorts of unpleasant things to you in this State if they find it out.

"I may not be much good, but I'm a better man than you are. Because I'm willing to concede that Mignon is a woman and a human being with a few rights of her own. Mignon loves you a lot, and there isn't any reason why we shouldn't all live happily together. If we can't--you'll have to get used to living alone."

Ma Variel rose and there was a flash of fire in her eyes.

"And if you try any rough stuff," said young Mickey O'Toole, "much as I'd hate to do it, I should just naturally be forced to hand you a good stiff wallop on the jaw. Because that's the only kind of language a selfish old Biddy like you understands. There are too darn many mothers like you around Hollywood.

"Now Mignon and I are going honeymooning."

"If you go," said Ma Variel, "you'll never get a cent of my money. You'll take her in the clothes she's got on."

"I'd take her in less than that," said her son-in-law. "Of course when my wife's twenty-one you'll have to make an accounting to her of all the moneys she's earned. She's got a right to that. And don't call me a fortune hunter. Because I know I'm not one and my opinion is the only one I really value. So I'm certainly not going to let Mignon's money interfere in our happiness."

The very air quivered.

The butler, coming in with hot toast, glanced at the three motionless figures and retreated hastily.

"Now, mother"--Mickey smiled engagingly--"now's the time for you to pull that great old classic about not having lost a daughter but gained a son. You've no idea what a lot of help I'm going to be to Mignon. She'll never have to depend just on you for her thinking again."

Ma Variel rang a bell. She was panting for breath now.

A trim, white-capped maid came down the stairs.

"Pack my things," said Ma Variel, her voice cracking like a whip, "and have Agnes pack Miss Mignon's. We're going to Coronado for a few days."

"You mean"--Mickey was puzzled but pleasant--"you mean all of us?"

"I mean I think you're a filthy little blackmailer, and if you've got this poor, ignorant child in your clutches so she can't get out--I'm going along."

"On our honeymoon? Oh, I assure you, mother darling, you'll feel frightfully in the way. Awfully, awfully de trop. Really you will. Ever been on anybody else's honeymoon?"

"Shut up," said Ma Variel. "I'm going with my daughter. She's never spent a night away from me since she was born."

"I know, dear, and they couldn't have Prohibition either," explained Mickey. "Isn't there an old proverb about there being a first time for everything? Mother, I think you're a great old girl. I respect you as a worthy antagonist. I suspect, moreover, that we have a lot in common. You're going to love me before you get through. But I cannot, I really cannot, take you on my honeymoon. In fact, if I had wanted you on my honeymoon I'd have married you. You'll have a honeymoon of your own yet, don't you stew, ma."

It is no exaggeration to say that Ma Variel choked.

She made one step forward and Mignon shrank. "You little fool--" she cried.

"Easy on," said Mickey, and his eyes were cool and dangerous. "You're speaking to my wife, you know. And a woman."

"I'm her mother--" said Gertrude Variel.

"I know, dear," said Mickey, "and motherhood is a beautiful thing if you don't abuse it. You can go right on being her mother, but you aren't going to be a war lord any more."

"Then go--go both of you. I never want to see you again," said Ma Variel. "Oh, Mignon, my baby--you won't leave me like this? You'll kill me--my baby--you can't leave your mamma like this--"

She had broken. She was pleading now.

"Mamma!" Mignon O'Toole held out her arms.

But a firm masculine hand circled her wrists. "That's a good way to feel about it," said Mickey quietly. "You just think it all over while we're gone and get your place in the scheme of things worked out in your head. And when we get through having a nice, long, glorious honeymoon--Mignon'll come back to work. And we'll probably see a lot of you then."

Ma Variel had not intended to be sitting in front of the fire, rocking that biggest doll of Mignon's, when her daughter came back.

But she was.

And when she saw the golden curls and the dimples and the round young face alive with happiness, her dramatic instinct made her begin to weep and to hold out the doll as she cried: "Oh, Mignon, it's the baby doll you used to love so much. The one you always played with."

Mrs. Mickey O'Toole walked straight across the big, empty drawing room to her mother's side.

She took the doll in firm, vigorous young hands and with one swift movement brought its china head down against the brick mantel.

The tinkle-tinkle on the hearth was like the shattering of a fallen idol.

"I don't want any more dolls, mamma," said Mignon O'Toole. "I want a baby. And I'm going to have one."

Her mother stood up, swaying. Every vestige of color and expression drained from her face.

And then slowly, cunningly, a very little smile began to creep about her set lips. It was the first time she had smiled since, in open battle, she had been vanquished by her son-in-law.

"Well," she said at last, and her voice was humble, "you may feel awfully independent and sassy right now, but I expect you'll need your mother quite considerable when it comes to having a baby."

"I expect I will, mamma," said Mignon softly.

(End)

* * * * *

In 1940, St. Johns wrote a character sketch of Mary Miles Minter, which included the following:

February 25, 1940
Adela Rogers St. Johns
AMERICAN WEEKLY

Mary Miles Minter: Millions, Murder, Misery--Will They Haunt Her Forever
(extract)

...For her first big starring picture, I've forgotten what it was, it never mattered much I guess, the director assigned to her was a man named William Desmond Taylor.

After he was murdered, after that morning when Hollywood shrieked with horror over the headlines announcing that his body had been found on the floor of his apartment with a bullet hole in the back, a great deal was said and written about Taylor's charm, his power over women, his career as a Don Juan in Hollywood.

I knew Taylor pretty well. Knew him because he was one of the leading directors at the time and it was my business to know him. And knew him because he was very much in love with Mabel Normand, who was one of my best and closest friends.

He always seemed to me a poised, rather cold man, and the thing I remember best about him is that his face was lean and deeply tanned and that he had a crooked smile. His eyes, it seems to me, were very brightly blue--at least they were very bright, and it was a little difficult to tell whether he was smiling or only looking at you very intently.

It may have been his soldier-of-fortune air that entranced the ladies. Also--for Hollywood was fairly crude in those days and as I have said very young--he had a worldly way with him, a sort of smiling hint that he knew a good deal more about life than most of us, had seen more, suffered and enjoyed more.

Women, especially very young ones, like that.

Mabel Normand who was the last person except the murderer to see him alive, was fond of him, liked his companionship, but she wasn't in love with him. That much I knew then.

When he and Mary Miles Minter first met--about two years, I think, before his ill-fated death--she was still a child and he was close to fifty.

He made her first big picture, as I said. The first thing you know, somehow, somewhere, the rumor began to drift about that Mary Miles Minter was

in love with Taylor. Later, in a sensational courtroom scene, her sister Margaret testified that Mary had been in love with Jim Kirkwood when he was her leading man [sic] and had gone through a "marriage in the sight of God" with him. Maybe she did.

If I were writing the story the way I see it from what I knew of the people, I would say that maybe Mary actually told Margaret that, maybe she dreamed it, maybe she was tired of never having a romance and made it up. I don't know. [1]

But at that time nobody in Hollywood ever heard of such a thing and when the first little hints about Taylor and Mary began to be heard we were all knocked silly.

Poor little kid. She hadn't ever had any sane romances. She hadn't gone dancing with young juveniles or listened to the love making of gay young scenario writers who usually tried out their love scenes on the pretty stars. Night after night she'd been home with her mother and her sister and her grandmother.

Day after day, she came to work at the studio, grave and quiet, hard-working, never having any fun. Thinking it over from this distance, the feeling comes over me that few girls ever lived so abnormal a life as Mary Miles Minter...

How she escaped her mother long enough to fall violently in love with Taylor is still a mystery...

Whatever it was--an affair, an engagement, or the dream-come-true adoration of a very young girl for an older man--Mary was in love. She saw him every day on the set. Sometimes at night she slipped out of the house and met him for a drive, or a long walk. It was her first love--it was her first companionship with any man--and it went deep. It began to eat her up, to be the paramount thing in her life.

So that sometimes she even defied her mother and met him openly. Not often--but a few times. So that even her first romance, its ending already shadowed in tragedy, began under a dark star. Her mother disapproved violently--there were scenes--tears--threats--all the things that go with such a

mother's disapproval.

Perhaps Taylor was in love with her. It's difficult to tell. For he was seeing a great deal of Mabel Normand, he was seeking her, calling her, trying to help her. Everybody was always trying to help Mabel...

Nothing that I know of can stop people speculating after such a shocking murder, when the police question and seek and follow clues and get nowhere. I was in New York when it happened. I rushed home at once--mostly because I wanted to be with Mabel Normand. Partly because I wanted to write some of the truths that I knew, as a citizen of Hollywood, while some outside reporters dashed in and made a Roman holiday of everyone who had ever spoken to Taylor...

Mythology

In her later years, Adela Rogers St. Johns wrote more about the Taylor case, and some of her later writing contradicted what she had written earlier. Were the earlier writings a whitewash and the later writings the truth? Or were the earlier writings the truth and the later writings her retelling of history as she felt it should be written?

In THE HONEYCOMB, St. Johns states that:

*Taylor and Normand "had never spoken a word of love."

*Taylor kept an emergency roll of \$5,000 cash handy (no such roll was ever discovered after his death)

*Faith MacLean was certain that the person she saw leaving Taylor's home on the murder night was Charlotte Shelby, dressed in man's clothing.

*St. Johns' husband, Ike St. Johns, had taken an article of "MMM" monogrammed pink chiffon step-ins from the murder scene on the morning the body was found.

*Adela St. Johns had heard gossip about the Taylor/Minter "affair" before the murder, and had heard the opinion expressed that Mrs. Shelby should shoot Taylor.

In LOVE, LAUGHTER AND TEARS, St. Johns states that:

*Normand and Taylor were only friends.

*Taylor is characterized as a "rattlesnake" who deserved to be killed because of his predatory relationship with Minter.

Analysis

Let's list some of St. Johns' contradictions.

Early writing:

Mabel loved Taylor, Taylor loved Mabel, they might have married some day.

Later writing:

Mabel and Taylor were only friends, and never a word of love was spoken between them.

Early writing:

Before the murder, St. Johns had never heard a whisper of scandal or a breath of criticism against Taylor.

Later writing:

Before the murder, she had several times heard the opinion expressed that Taylor should be killed because of his relationship with Minter.

Early writing:

Taylor was characterized as one of the finest men she had ever known.

Later writing:

Taylor was characterized as a rattlesnake who deserved to be killed.

Early writing:

She had no idea who killed Taylor, or why he was killed, but believed

that it had nothing to do with himself or any act of his.

Later writing:

She was certain that Taylor was killed by Charlotte Shelby because of his relationship with Minter.

So what are we to believe; which is truth and which is fiction? Perhaps one clue can be found in what she says about Faith MacLean. In St. Johns' later writing she states that Faith MacLean told her the person leaving Taylor's home immediately after the murder was positively Charlotte Shelby. But when re-questioned by investigators in 1937, Faith MacLean "partially identified" Carl Stockdale as the person she had seen [2] That partial identification may have been related to the fact that she originally stated the person she saw had a prominent nose, and Stockdale's nose was very prominent; when shown a picture of Stockdale she might have said, "Yes, it might have been him--the nose seems similar--but I'm not certain." In any event, Faith MacLean's "partial identification" of Carl Stockdale appears to indicate that Adela Rogers St. Johns was incorrect. How could Faith MacLean partially identify Stockdale if she was positive that Shelby was the person she saw? If St. Johns' later writing was incorrect about the identification of the person seen by Faith MacLean, then other portions of St. Johns' later writing may also be inaccurate.

There is sufficient evidence to reasonably conclude that Taylor was in love with Mabel Normand; they were not "only friends". The statements of Peavey and the Fellows brothers, the fact that Taylor was sending flowers to Mabel several times a week and giving her expensive gifts, the fact that he carried her picture with him in a frame inscribed "to my dearest"--all point toward his very strong affection for her. So it appears that the earlier statements by St. Johns were more truthful in this matter.

Some of St. Johns' other writing was certainly erroneous; in LOVE, LAUGHTER AND TEARS she reports as fact the apocryphal tale about Mabel Normand walking

off a Goldwyn film set and going to Paris; in reality Mabel's first trip to Europe did not take place until 1922, which was long after her Goldwyn contract had ended. She never walked off a film set and went to Europe--her European trips all took place between films.

But overall, it is impossible to determine whether some of St. Johns' earlier statements are more accurate than her later statements. The mere existence of the contradictions cast doubt upon St. Johns' truthfulness as a writer, and thus she should not be cited as an authoritative source for any facts of the case. What she wrote is often interesting, but must be regarded as uncertain unless independent verification is available.

NEXT ISSUE: The Case Against Edward Sands:
 Who was Sands?
 Press Items Indicating Sands was the Killer
 Sands' Sexuality
 Was Sands the Person Seen by Faith MacLean?
 Was Robbery an Element of the Murder Motive?

NOTES:

[1] As the affair between Minter and Kirkwood resulted in an abortion, it certainly was not just a fantasy of Minter's. See WDT: DOSSIER, p. 328.

[2] See WDT: DOSSIER, p. 329.

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>
<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>
<http://www.uno.edu/~drif/arbuckle/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>

For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 19 -- July 1994 Editor: Bruce Long *
* TAYLOROROLOGY may be freely distributed *

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Wallace Smith: February 14, 1922

What is TAYLOROROLOGY?

TAYLOROROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

The Case Against Edward Sands:

From the very beginning, Edward F. Sands was a prime suspect in Taylor's murder and several of the investigators on the case were convinced of his guilt. Yet A CAST OF KILLERS and A DEED OF DEATH quickly shrug off the possibility that Sands killed Taylor. Nevertheless, the case against Sands is substantial, and any thorough consideration of the Taylor case must include a much closer look in Sands' direction.

Who was Sands?

Edward Sands' real name was Edward Fitzgerald Snyder. [1] For several months he also went under the alias of Edward Fitzwilliam Strathmore. Military fingerprints confirmed that Snyder and Strathmore were the same person; handwriting analysis confirmed that Snyder, Strathmore and Sands were all the same person. [2]

Edward Fitzgerald Snyder was born in Marion, Ohio on April 4, 1894, the son of Murray T. Snyder and Marguerite A. Snyder. Edward had many brothers and sisters, and the family home was at 572 Silver St., Marion, Ohio.

Edward Snyder first enlisted in the U.S. Navy on September 19, 1911, at the Navy Recruiting Station in Cincinnati. He had run away from home and was only 17, but he lied about his age and said he was 18, giving his birthdate as 1893. He entered as an Apprentice Seaman; in 1912 he attended Yeoman School and was subsequently promoted to Yeoman 3rd Class in 1912, Yeoman 2nd Class in 1913, and Yeoman 1st Class in 1914. He served on the U.S.S. Franklin, U.S.S. Constellation, U.S.S. Montana, and U.S.S. Paducah. His duty assignments included Pay Office, and Canteen Yeoman. In mid-1915, while on board the U.S.S. Paducah, he was arrested and charged with fraud and embezzlement. The general court martial was held at the Navy Yard in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Snyder was found guilty and sentenced to be reduced in rank to the rating of Landsman and to perform one year of hard labor, then to be discharged. He was

confined to the navy prison aboard the U.S.S. Southery at the Navy Yard in Portsmouth and was dishonorably discharged on August 6, 1916.

Two weeks later, on August 21, 1916, Snyder enlisted again, this time at Boston, Massachusetts, in the U.S. Coast Guard as an Ordinary Seaman. On his enlistment form he fraudulently declared that he had never received a dishonorable discharge from any service, and that he had no previous military service. Although he entered as an Ordinary Seaman, he was "disrated [reduced in rank] to Boy 1st Class at his own request" on September 1, 1916. On December 4 he was promoted to Cabin Steward and held that rank until his discharge. He served on the cutter Gresham from the time of his enlistment until his honorable discharge on August 20, 1917, a full year's service.

On October 17, 1917, Snyder enlisted in the U.S. Naval Reserve at the Navy Yard in New York, NY, service number 193-31-03. (During World War I, the U.S. Naval Reserve had been mobilized into active service.) He entered as a Ship's Cook, 2nd Class, and was sent to the Naval Reserve Training Station at Pelham Park, New York. While there, he was promoted to Commissary Steward on February 1, 1918. In April 1918 Snyder was transferred to the Naval District Base at New London, Connecticut, and on December 1 he was promoted to Chief Commissary Steward. He was placed in charge of the commissary department at P. A. Scott & Co., salvagers. One night he stole an automobile belonging to Albert Mix, a member of the Scott firm. Snyder wrecked the car, smashing it into a telegraph pole. He was arrested and let off on the condition that he pay for the damages incurred. He said he could get the money in New York, and was given permission to go there. He left the Naval Base on January 14, 1919 and never returned, sending back word that "they would have to come after it" if they wanted the money. Snyder had deserted for the first time. [3]

On February 8, 1919, Snyder enlisted at Kansas City in the U.S. Navy again, but this time under the name Edward Fitzwilliam Strathmore; he accomplished the change of name by presenting the recruiter with a forged certificate of honorable discharge from the U.S. Coast Guard, in Strathmore's name. "Strathmore" was assigned to the Naval Training Station at Great Lakes, Illinois, service number 341-01-01, and he entered as a Landsman for a

Cook. In March 1919 the Navy Department in Washington discovered that Strathmore was really the same person as Edward Snyder who had previously been dishonorably discharged from the Navy in 1916. (But the Navy Department was at that time unaware of Snyder's two interim enlistments in the Coast Guard and Naval Reserve, or the fact that he was currently wanted as a deserter.) On April 1, 1919 he was summoned to the office of his commander, confronted with his previous dishonorable discharge, instructed to secure the necessary affidavits showing his correct name and date of birth, and to make a written statement explaining his motive for reinlisting. Snyder/Strathmore responded by deserting again. [4]

Snyder's next stop was the U.S. Coast Guard, enlisting again under the name of Edward Fitzwilliam Strathmore, as a Cook on April 17, 1919 at Brooklyn, N.Y., service number 144-441. He was sent to USCG Station #239 at Cleveland, Ohio on April 18. He repeatedly went absent without leave during his month there, and on May 18, 1919, he deserted again.

"Strathmore" next enlisted in the U.S. Army at Columbus Barracks, Ohio, on May 22, 1919, service number 6-428-758. He was soon assigned to the finance office, and on August 25 he was promoted to sergeant. One of his duties was the drawing up of government checks for payment of bills. On October 4 he made out a check payable to himself for \$481.53, forged the signature of the finance officer, and deserted, also forging a signature to an army discharge for himself. After deserting he attempted to buy a motorcycle with the forged check.

Snyder now adopted the name Edward F. Sands, and by mid-1920 had obtained the job of valet and cook to William Desmond Taylor in Los Angeles. In July 1921, while Taylor was in Europe and Sands had been left to take care of Taylor's home, Sands forged checks on Taylor's account, wrecked Taylor's car, stole some of Taylor's clothing, and vanished. When Taylor returned he issued a formal complaint against Sands, and a police warrant was issued by the L.A.P.D., charging Sands with forgery and larceny.

One newspaper quoted Snyder's father as stating that three months prior to the murder (which would have been around the beginning of November 1921)

Edward Snyder had visited his sister, Mrs. George Dunn, in Cleveland, Ohio. [5]

On November 17, 1921, Snyder enlisted once again under his real name, in the U.S. Coast Guard at Oakland, and was assigned to the cutter Bear as a Mess Attendant 1st Class, service number 143-512. On November 26, Snyder was dismissed from his enlistment and discharged for being absent without leave. (This discharge was technically an ordinary discharge, for "unsatisfactory probationary period.")

On December 4, 1921, Taylor's home was burglarized. The back door was broken in and several items of Taylor's jewelry were stolen, along with his entire stock of special gold-tipped cigarettes. Some food was eaten from the refrigerator and dusty footprints were found on Taylor's bed. The stolen jewelry was pawned in Fresno on December 12, and in Sacramento on December 24; the person pawning the jewelry was identified as Edward Sands, which was confirmed by handwriting analysis. Sands either committed the burglary, or it was committed by his associate who then turned the stolen merchandise over to Sands. [6] In mid-December a gold-tipped cigarette was found on Taylor's doorstep, indicating that Sands had returned once again. On December 27, both pawn tickets were mailed to Taylor from Stockton, with a note that read: "So sorry to inconvenience you even temporarily. Also observe the lesson of the forced sale of assets. A Merry Xmas and a happy and prosperous New Year. Alias Jimmy V." Handwriting analysis confirmed the note was written by Sands/Snyder/Strathmore.

There were many reported and rumored sightings of Sands after this time, but his whereabouts after the murder were never confirmed. [7] Regarding his military service, he is known to have enlisted seven times: four times he deserted and twice he was kicked out. Only one of his seven enlistments was satisfactorily completed.

[Special thanks to Susan Snyder of Columbus, Ohio, for obtaining and providing much of the information regarding Sands'/Snyder's military record. Thanks also to John Christin.]

Items Suggesting Sands was the Killer

February 3, 1922

LOS ANGELES TIMES

[from an interview with Julia Crawford Ivers]...Mrs. Ivers then told of the difficulty Mr. Taylor said he had with his valet-secretary, Sands.

"There never was a more devoted man serving another than this man Sands during the first year and a half of his service for Mr. Taylor. Mr. Taylor trusted him with everything.

"...Sands read everything he could find. He used to study into the late hours of the night and when Mr. Taylor told me of the various actions attributed to Sands, we all decided the man must have become deranged..."

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February 4, 1922

ST. LOUIS GLOBE DEMOCRAT

(Los Angeles)--...Captain of Police R. Moffatt said today, "We are seeking Sands for any information that he can throw upon the subject [of Taylor's murder]. The only possible motive thus far uncovered is that of putting out of the way a complaining witness in two felony cases. Sands was accused of felony by Taylor."

* * * * *

February 4, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

...Of almost equal interest in the development of the investigation was the statement of Mrs. Earl Tiffany, wife of Taylor's chauffeur, that she saw Edward F. Sands, ex-secretary-valet of the murdered director, now sought as a witness, at Sixth and Figueroa Streets Tuesday afternoon last [the day prior to the murder] at 1:20 o'clock.

...The search for Sands continued with unabated intensity. He is said to have returned to Los Angeles Tuesday and uttered this threat:

"I am here to get Bill Taylor."

His intimate knowledge of Taylor's double identity was revealed in startling fashion late yesterday when in Fresno it was learned that Sands had there pawned jewelry stolen from Taylor and that he had given the name "William Deane-Tanner," asserted to be Taylor's true name.

...The police are assured beyond peradventure that the man who pawned the jewelry in Fresno, using the true name of the owner in a spirit of malicious triumph, was Edward Sands.

There is something in this very circumstance which to the officers is itself a flood of light coming out of the darkness.

The stealing and forgery indulged in by Sands did not convey the spirit of this piece of treachery; they might have been only for gain. But now that the Fresno episode is brought up from the obscurity of a dark little hole-in-the-wall pawn shop to be made plain in all its details, a new element appears.

This new element is the pronounced unfriendliness of Sands, which takes on the aspect of a sinister and silent threat.

The malice is further revealed in what seems to have been a persistent campaign of Sands to annoy the director.

From Fresno he sent him a pawn ticket, a ticket issued on valuables stolen from Taylor on which money had been raised.

Still another pawn ticket came through the mail from Sacramento. With this was the letter signed "Alias Jimmy V."

These were derisive thrusts at Taylor; from some motive which has not been revealed the thief and forger was trying to torture the victim of his crimes.

...Something of the description of this man was learned yesterday by The Examiner from A. A. Tomlinson, an accountant of 1022 West Fortieth Place.

"The true name of this man," said Tomlinson, "is not Sands but Strathmore. I recognized him by his picture in this morning's Examiner.

"He enlisted in the army during the war as Edward Fitz Strathmore and was

assigned to Columbus Barracks, Ohio. I was then head of the finance office and upon learning that Strathmore had been a chief petty officer in the navy I asked that he be transferred to my department, which was done.

"On October 4, 1919, Strathmore forged my name to a Government check for \$475 and tried to buy a motorcycle with it. He failed to carry out this scheme, but escaped. At the same time he forged the commanding officer's name to a discharge. He has been wanted for desertion.

"On July 4, 1920, I met him on Alvarado Street. He told me that he was expecting to get work with the street car company. I notified the police, but he disappeared.

"During his service with me at Columbus Barracks, Strathmore often boasted of the crimes he had committed. I did not believe him then, but thought it was a case of a young fellow drawing on his imagination.

"Once I asked him what he would do if he were in a dangerous situation. He said he would shoot his way out."

* * * * *

February 4, 1922
Edward Doherty
PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

(Los Angeles)--...A peculiar thing in the minds of the police is that both Sands and Peavey are of a queer type, affected, given to feminine ways.

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February 5, 1922
PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

(Los Angeles)--...The police continued their search for Edward F. Sands, a former secretary and valet to Taylor.

According to the statement of one person made to the police, this man was in Los Angeles not later than last Tuesday, the day before the murder was committed. He is alleged to have made a statement to this person that "I am out to get Taylor--and I will get him."

Before the murder police were directing a search for this man on the complaint of Taylor, who charged that he had robbed him of several thousand dollars. It seemed to enrage Sands, according to friends, to think that his former employer objected to being the victim of a robbery by his personal servant and he fled from Los Angeles breathing vengeance against Taylor, it is alleged.

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February 6, 1922
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

(from an interview with actress Winifred Kingston)..Miss Kingston threw some very interesting light on Sands' career, details gleaned, she said, from various conversations with Taylor.

"While Edward Knoblock was living at Mr. Taylor's home [during June/July 1921 when Taylor was in Europe], " she said, "Sands went down to a well known department store in town and bought at various times a considerable amount of lingerie. I understood he gave these to a girl he was interested in--a very young creature who lived at home with her mother. All of this he charged to Mr. Taylor's account, a matter which greatly enraged the director when he returned from abroad.

..."During this same period, when Mr. Knoblock was a guest of Mr. Taylor's and was supposed to pay for nothing, Sands presented the English author with a bill amounting to some hundreds of dollars for groceries he had used while at the house. Mr. Knoblock, being a gentleman and not wanting a row, however little he understood the matter, paid the bill. When Mr. Taylor returned he was naturally dumbfounded.

"On another occasion Sands did another peculiar thing. Mr. Taylor had two thermos bottles around the house, neither of any particular value. There were many other things Sands easily could have stolen of more value. But he took one of these bottles to present to some girl. Her mother did not understand the act at all and didn't want the girl to take it.

"Most unusual of Sands' actions, however, was a document he once drew up.

"One day, to show his affection and regard for Mr. Taylor, he wrote, in his own handwriting, a sort of servile contract, in which he said that he would be Mr. Taylor's servant for life and would always be his slave.

"Mr. Taylor told me about the document and laughed. I don't know what ever happened to the paper, but Sands apparently took it seriously.

"All of this led me to believe that the man was mentally deranged and he is the only man I can think of who might have killed Mr. Taylor."

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February 6, 1922

NEW YORK HERALD

(Los Angeles)--...The fact that his houseman, Henry Peavey, and his former secretary, Edward F. Sands, are both said to be "queer persons," has led to much speculation whether Taylor was abnormal himself. It is thought by a majority who are investigating the case that this is a phase which will develop and throw much new light on the case.

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February 6, 1922

SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

(Los Angeles)--A new and vital witness upon one of the big points in the William D. Taylor murder mystery was found tonight by an Examiner representative, who received from him the most important statement yet made as to Edward F. Sands, whom the police of the nation are seeking.

This man, a well known citizen living within a block of the Taylor apartment at 404B South Alvarado Street, saw Sands within a few minutes after the time the film director was murdered.

The information furnished by this citizen was turned over to the police and is regarded as the most definite yet obtained in its bearing upon the movements of the much sought Sands.

"I was going home Wednesday night," said the informant, "and was possibly a block from the Taylor home when I saw Edward Sands across the street. I had

known him some time and recognized him at once under the glare of an electric light.

"As he knew me equally well the recognition was mutual. But instead of crossing over or of speaking as I naturally expected he would do, he turned his face the other way and hurried on, taking the first turn and disappearing.

"His actions struck me as peculiar at the time. He appeared to be trying to conceal himself, did not want to be recognized.

"My general impression of him at the time was that he was excited and flustered.

"The time was just about 8 o'clock. He was coming from the direction of Taylor's apartment, hurrying along as though to lose no time, a very fast walk, I would describe it, which might easily have changed into a run...

"If Sands were arrested, charged with murder and tried I would testify to these facts if called as a witness."

After being seen by an Examiner reporter the Hollywood resident made the same statement to police detectives.

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February 6, 1922

LOS ANGELES HERALD

Several detectives were inclined to the theory that the person who slew Taylor may have been mentally unbalanced, and qualified their remarks regarding that phase of the probe by discussing confidential reports obtained today from the mystery witness who called at detective headquarters and who was said to have stated he saw Sands near the scene of the slaying late Wednesday night.

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February 7, 1922

LOS ANGELES TIMES

...The visit of Mr. Eyton to the Detective Bureau was for the purpose of aiding in the search for Sands. Several witnesses who know the fugitive say

they saw him in Los Angeles about the time of the shooting. At least two persons believe they saw him on the night of the shooting. One woman saw Sands within a block of the Taylor home within less than two hours of the time set for the murder.

Capt. Adams in a statement to newspaper men declared that the entire case hinges on Sands.

"If we can locate Sands," declared Capt. Adams, "then we will be able once and for all to settle the question of his whereabouts on the night of the murder. If Sands cannot prove to our satisfaction where he was on Wednesday night between 7 and 8 o'clock we will then believe that we have found the right man."

...Several women and three men, all of whom know Sands by sight, say that they saw him on the streets of the city during the last month.

...Police say Sands has lost some weight since he fled after the first robbery.

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February 8, 1922

ARIZONA REPUBLICAN

(Los Angeles)--A complaint charging Edward F. Sands, alias Edward Fitz Strathmore, missing butler-secretary, with the murder of his former employer, William Desmond Taylor, will be issued, it was declared tonight by Detective Sergeant Edward King, of the police department who is detailed to work in the district attorney's office. The complaint will be based on "new and conclusive" evidence uncovered today, according to King.

"In my mind," said Sergeant King, "the case has been solved."

"There is no doubt left. I believe that Sands is the man. A murder complaint will be issued against him.

"We have uncovered corroborative evidence of such a nature that the arrest of Sands is absolutely necessary in clearing this mystery."

...At the same time Captain Adams declared Sands was the only person whose arrest the police were seeking in connection with the case.

"There has been abundant surmise about other individuals," he said, "and we have run down countless clues relating to the murder. But I can say positively that we have no leads that would warrant us seeking any one but Sands."

The circular reads as follows:

"We hold warrants on charges of grand larceny, felonies for the arrest of Edward F. Sands. We also have burglary charges against him and seek him for the murder of William Desmond Taylor in the city of Los Angeles of February 1, 1922.

..."He is about 26 years of age, height five feet seven or eight inches; heavy build; some months ago weighed 185 to 195 pounds or more, but is said to be lighter now; present weight may not be more than 175; round full face, light complexion, very heavy brown hair, rather heavy eyebrows, said by some to almost meet over his nose; short nose; peculiar mouth which looks small when closed; smokes cigarettes; usually well dressed; is well educated, fine penman, good accountant..." [8]

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February 8, 1922

Edward Doherty

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

(Los Angeles)--...Capt. David L. Adams, directing the police, insists that Sands is the only man who can solve the crime...

"The more one talks over this case," said Adams, "the more certain it seems that Sands is implicated. Sands knew all about the shady side of Taylor's life; knew his name was Tanner; knew undoubtedly about the wife and girl back east...

"It is quite likely Sands killed Taylor, either out of revenge for what he considered unjust treatment--unrequited affection, if you will--he was of a peculiarly feminine nature, remember--or in an attempted blackmail which failed at the last minute."

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February 8, 1922

LOS ANGELES RECORD

A complaint charging Sands with the murder was to be issued today by the district attorney's office. William Doran, chief deputy district attorney, said there was no doubt in his mind that Sands is the guilty man.

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February 8, 1922

LOS ANGELES HERALD

(Los Angeles)--Captain of Detectives David Adams made the flat statement today that secret information in his possession positively links Sands with the slaying and the police were concentrating their efforts upon a search for the former secretary.

"We have obtained secret information that we believe virtually solves the murder," Captain Adams stated. "We are centering our efforts on the location of Sands. This information has not been made public, nor will it be, but it is positive in its character."

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February 9, 1922

LOS ANGELES TIMES

...Information in the hands of police detectives indicates that Sands was near the scene of the crime about the time of the shooting, which is officially believed to have been about 7:50 or 7:55 p.m. a week ago yesterday. He also has been reported from reliable sources to have been in Los Angeles both before and after that day.

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February 9, 1922

NEW YORK AMERICAN

E. W. Wingate, of the Famous Players, who saw William Desmond Taylor just

before leaving Hollywood two weeks ago, expressed disbelief to The N. Y. American yesterday that a woman had been at the bottom of the Taylor murder mystery.

...Mr. Wingate declared that in his talk with Taylor about the Christmas greetings he had received from "Alias Jimmy Valentine," it struck him that there was a peculiar relationship between Edward F. Sands, his secretary-valet, and Taylor. The tone of the facetious and threatening notes accredited to Sands gave the impression that he considered it his right to pawn Taylor's clothes and steal Taylor's money...

Previous to this robbery and message, Wingate said, it was rumored in Hollywood that Taylor had received a message from Jimmy Valentine, following the first robbery, after Taylor's return from Europe, which read:

"I got these things this time, but next time I get you."

* * * * *

February 9, 1922
LOS ANGELES TIMES

...Several of the officers adhere closely to the theory that Sands, inspired by hate and a desire for revenge upon the man who caused him to be a fugitive from justice, slipped into the Taylor home and shot down his former employer...The officers who believe Sands committed the murder hold the opinion that he is insane, or at least mentally unbalanced because of his troubles, and believe many of his actions can be accounted for in this way.

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February 10, 1922
Edward Doherty
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

(Los Angeles)--Two hours after William Desmond Taylor was murdered--that is, about 10 o'clock on the night of February 1--a man was seen loitering in the vicinity of Taylor's residence, hiding behind a telephone pole.

Policeman Thomas Long saw him. He saw the policeman. He disappeared.

After the discovery of the murder Policeman Long found near the telephone pole the gold tips of two smoked cigarettes--cigarettes of the same brand as those stolen from the house.

The policeman, who told the story to Capt. David L. Adams last Sunday, repeated it this evening to District Attorney Woolwine. It was the first time the story has become public. Considerable importance is attached to the clew.

A few days after the burglary a cigarette stub was found on the doorstep of Taylor's home. It was one of the stolen ones.

It was about 10 o'clock, according to Long, when he saw the man skulking back of the telephone post. The shot was heard about 8 o'clock and the man Mrs. Douglas MacLean, wife of the film star, saw, left immediately after the shot was fired. Is he the man of the cigarette? Is he the man seen by the policeman? Why was he waiting there?

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February 10, 1922

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Sands Insane, Friend Thinks

The belief of detectives that if Edward F. Sands, valet-secretary to William D. Taylor, killed his employer, he was insane, was bolstered last night by information tending to show that the missing fugitive was mentally deranged.

George S. Brettner, who became well acquainted with Sands before the latter's disappearance more than a year ago, [sic] told of actions and remarks of a peculiar nature.

At that time Sands was talking of joining a foreign navy or going to South America, according to Mr. Brettner. He said he was becoming restless and wanted a change, but spoke no ill of Mr. Taylor.

"I don't know what I'd do if I lost my job and didn't have any money," Sands is reported to have said. "When I get to be 35 years old I'm going to blow my head off. I don't see any use of people living after that age. They're not good for anything. I used to be chief petty officer in the

Quartermaster Corps aboard ships, and I guess I might as well enlist and be taken care of until I'm ready to shoot myself."

Sands always carried a .45-caliber Colt revolver, Mr. Brettner said. One morning Mr. Brettner went to Sands's room and found him asleep. He touched him on the shoulder to awaken him. Sands turned over like a flash and pressed the weapon against Mr. Brettner, but when he saw who it was he turned over and went to sleep again without saying a word.

"Sands was keeping company with a girl who frequented Wilson's Dancing Academy," said the informant. "He seemed to be infatuated with her. He weighed about 185 pounds at that time and was trying to reduce to 150 pounds. I used to find him at Mr. Taylor's home perusing the Encyclopedia Britannica by the hour. Sometimes he would refuse to speak to me, and when I'd meet him a few days later he would apologize and say he had been feeling depressed."

...Mr. Brettner said he did not believe Sands killed the director unless perhaps he was seized with an insane obsession.

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February 10, 1922
CHICAGO HERALD-EXAMINER

(Los Angeles)--...One of the revolvers belonging to Taylor is a German Lueger, with shoulder piece.

Taylor did not bring this back from France, but bought it in New York. A friend recalls that one day he and Taylor tried in vain to fit the shoulder piece to the revolver and finally asked Sands, the valet, if he knew anything about the Lueger. Without a word, Sands took up the two and by one motion fitted them together. Taylor turned to his friend and said, "Is there anything Sands does not know?" That was before his break with Sands, due to alleged forgery of his name to checks and thefts of clothing by his valet.

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February 11, 1922
Elizabeth Barnes

"Find Sands!"

This laconic suggestion of Mrs. J. M. Berger, income tax specialist, is the solution of the William Desmond Taylor murder mystery.

"No doubt of it in my mind," said Mrs. Berger, a young business woman, with a wealth of bronze hair, and brown eyes. "Edward F. Sands is the man, I am sure."

Mrs. Berger opened her mail as she talked about the motion picture director who had called at her office in the H. W. Hellman building just a few hours before he was slain in his bachelor apartments.

"He was here in the afternoon to attend some business," she explains. "I help not only motion picture folks but many prominent business men on their income tax returns."

"Had he expressed a fear of Sands?" Mrs. Berger was asked.

"Yes, he had talked about his former valet-secretary's forging his name, and about the 'Alias Jimmy Valentine' note that he had received.

"I did not know Mr. Taylor intimately--only in a business way, but I knew some of the most intimate details of his business which I have told to the district attorney in an effort to clear up the mystery.

.."I do not think there is a woman in the case...I cannot believe a woman had anything to do with it...

"I only know that he was a perfect gentleman, and that I hope the police never rest until they apprehend the assassin who robbed the world of such a fine man."

* * * * *

February 12, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

[regarding the night of the murder] Mrs. M. S. Stone, mother-in-law of A. W. Wachter, of 412-A South Alvarado Street, gave one of the most interesting recitals that has yet come to the attention of officers. She said:

"I was walking slowly up Alvarado Street, going to the home of Mr.

Wachter for dinner."

Mrs. Stone lives at the Duke Apartments on South Carondelet Street, and frequently goes to the Wachter home for dinner, generally walking north on Alvarado Street from Westlake Park to the latter home.

"As I crossed from the west to the east side of Alvarado Street, at Sixth, I saw a man standing on the corner, apparently waiting for a car. But he didn't board the car that came along, and as I was rather nervous about walking up the street in the dusk, I waited momentarily on the corner."

The man stopped in front of the Hotel Alvarado, according to Mrs. Stone, and transferred something from his left hip pocket to the right hand pocket of his coat.

"Then he started rather aimlessly up the hill, on Alvarado Street," Mrs. Stone continued.

"I walked on behind him, and when he reached Maryland Street he turned north [sic] out of Alvarado."

Maryland Street is the one that runs directly behind the apartment occupied by Taylor.

Mrs. Stone said that when she noticed the man at first she said to herself that he would have been well dressed except for the fact that his suit did not appear to fit well at the collar--that it bulged uncertainly in the rear, and that his collar was not visible.

"At that time," Mrs. Stone said, speaking of the man's turning into Maryland Street, "I thought it might have been Taylor's chef."

She knew Edward F. Sands, Taylor's former valet and chauffeur [sic], as his chef, having seen him in the court at various times wearing the white cap common to cooks.

* * * * *

February 13, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

One of the most startling bits of information turned over to the investigators was the reported statement of Henry Peavey, Taylor's colored

servant, that he expected to see his employer killed. This statement was made, it is said, the day following the robbery of Taylor's home by Sands.

Shortly after the last robbery of the slain director's home Peavey is said to have told Harold Freeman, a milkman who delivered milk to the Taylor home, that he expected to find Taylor dead on the morning after the robbery was committed and would not be surprised if he himself were not later killed.

...Another development of importance concerned information about a woman whom Edward F. Sands, former valet-secretary to Taylor, is alleged to have visited frequently.

...Freeman, who says he met Sands every morning for several months, also declared that he saw the fugitive ex-servant shortly after Christmas in front of a downtown theater. Freeman states that he and his wife were standing in front of the showhouse early in the evening when Sands passed.

Freeman further declared, it is said, that Sands asserted that he had "something on Taylor." On several occasions when Freeman remarked how well Taylor treated his employee, Sands is said to have replied:

"Well, he has to treat me right, for I certainly have the goods on him."

* * * * *

During the questioning of Earl Tiffany (former chauffeur of Taylor) by Thomas Woolwine, Tiffany recalled Sands saying to him one day: "Let's go upstairs and see who the old man's been sleeping with." (In other words, let's go look for evidence of someone else having been in Taylor's bedroom.)

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February 19, 1922

SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS

(Los Angeles)--...Captain of Detectives David L. Adams said with emphasis:

"It is Sands, I tell you. And everybody else is coming around to my way of thinking."

His statement followed a conference between himself, District Attorney Thomas Lee Woolwine and detectives working on the case. It was the second conference of its kind in two days. Capt. Adams admitted that a warrant for murder against Sands had been asked, but was voted down by the majority as inadvisable at the present time.

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February 27, 1922
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

It was revealed yesterday that Detective Sergeant Tom Ziegler, first officer to arrive at the scene of the crime, found among Taylor's effects several checks bearing the director's signature and not filled out and one made to Edward F. Sands for \$950.

This, it is believed, was a forgery. The others were to be used by Sands during Taylor's absence in Europe for payment of household bills. The \$950 check was never cashed. The conclusion is that Sands was trying his hand at forgery.

Although the entire country has been circularized for this man, who is believed by many of the officers to be the murderer, no trace of him has been found. Reports that he is in Mexico have never been verified.

.....\$1000 REWARD will be paid by The Examiner for information furnished exclusively to this office that will lead to the arrest and conviction of the slayer of William Desmond Taylor.

\$500 will be paid by The Examiner for exclusive information as to the whereabouts of Edward F. Sands. Call City Editor of Examiner, Pico 4000.

* * * * *

March 3, 1922
Edward Doherty
DENVER POST

(Los Angeles)--New secret information as to the attitude of Edward F. Sands toward his former master, William Desmond Taylor, murdered movie director, set in motion Thursday another desperate effort to find him.

Sands is as mysterious a figure as Taylor was...Out of mystery came Sands to Taylor as valet, chef, general utility man, friend.

It seems that Sands must have known Taylor in that other life of his, took advantage of his knowledge. It is known that he robbed his master on at least two occasions. When he pawned the jewelry he had taken, he pawned it under the name of William Cunningham Deane-Tanner.

The servant masqueraded as his master. The detectives wonder if the master ever masqueraded as his servant.

Sands was of a peculiar nature, say those who know him well. He was effeminate.

His voice heard over a telephone, was usually mistaken for that of a girl. He loved to do little things for his master. He once even signed a paper vowing he would be Taylor's slave for life.

He resented Taylor's reproof after the first robbery. He felt, it appears, that he had more or less of a right to help himself to what he wanted, when ever he wanted.

He took back his vow of slavery. He began to hate the household duties, the menial tasks appointed for him. He even boasted of sticking his fingers in his master's soup before serving it to him.

He began even to hate his master, who did not fear him and the knowledge he possessed, the master who even made complaint to the police charging robbery and forgery. He fled to avoid arrest, but he sent back messages signed "Alias Jimmy Valentine." He, it is believed, was the one who entered the Taylor residence on several occasions, once taking some of the director's gold-tipped cigarettes.

The detectives have other indications of the devotion that changed to malice. They say that Sands' bitterness reached its peak when he learned that Taylor had hired Henry Peavey, a Negro, to replace him and that Peavey was a wonder at concocting rice pudding, and a marvel with the crochet needles.

They recall that a man answering Sands' description was seen near the Taylor residence on the night of the murder, smoking cigarettes, that he ran when a policeman approached him, and that the cigarette stubs found where the

man had been standing had gold tips--were evidently some of those stolen from Taylor.

The detectives point out that Sands having been in the army and in the navy--he is wanted for desertion and has several dishonorable discharges in his record--must have been familiar with firearms. The man who shot and killed Taylor certainly knew how to handle a weapon.

The bullet entered a vital spot. Death was instantaneous, the doctors say.

They believe that Sands is a degenerate, and that possibly he is insane. He certainly had a motive for murder--revenge, desperation, malice--perhaps even a more sinister motive.

It has been charged that Taylor was a member of an unnatural love cult, a cult comprised entirely of men, and the detectives who have been trying to get track of Sands say they believe Sands was also a member of the cult. They declare he bore an odd affection for the man he served, and that he was not only enraged when he was charged with theft, but outraged--and jealous.

* * * * *

March 8, 1922

LOS ANGELES RECORD

Captain of Detectives David L. Adams stated Wednesday that the police hunt for the murder of William Desmond Taylor had again narrowed to a search for Edward F. Sands, missing secretary-valet of the picture director.

Sands was seen only a few days before the shooting in the vicinity of the Taylor bungalow at 404-B South Alvarado Street by a 10-year-old girl, it is thought. The girl, who knew Sands when he was employed by Taylor, is positive in her identification.

The fact that the man, already charged with robbery and forgery by his employer, risked detection to visit the spot where he formerly worked, strengthens Captain Adams' conviction that he is responsible for the murder.

* * * * *

City of Los Angeles, California
Police Department
Jas. W. Everington, Chief of Police

March 20, 1922

Commanding Officer
Bureau of Navigation
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

Referring to your letter of Feb. 8th, 1922, your Reference No. N-622-JHT-WLB, relative to deserter known to your Department as Edward Fitzgerald Snyder, alias Edward Fitzwilliam Strathmore, and believed by us to be here known as Edward F. Sands, wanted in connection with the murder of William Desmond Taylor, beg to advise you that we have been unable to get any trace of him since the Taylor murder was committed, and knowing his penchant for enlisting in the Navy, we believe it possible, in fact probable, that he has again enlisted under some other name, and respectfully request that if consistent with your regulations, your Department notify all Naval Recruiting Officers to be on the lookout for him, and that your Department Heads be instructed to have all of their subordinates who file enlistment descriptions and other data informed of the fact that we are very anxious to locate and apprehend this man.

With the aid of the very complete data furnished by your Department in the communication of Feb. 8th last, we feel that we have fully established the identity of the man known here as Edward F. Sands, and that he is the man known to your Department as Edward Fitzgerald Snyder.

Assuring you of my sincere appreciation of your co-operation and thanking you for same, I am,

Respectfully

/s/ Jas. W. Everington

Chief of Police

* * * * *

March 24, 1926

LOS ANGELES HERALD

(Chicago)--From Chicago officials who came into touch with District Attorney Asa Keyes of Los Angeles the secret of much of the mystery thrown out by Keyes regarding a solution of the murder of William Desmond Taylor, was learned today.

Keyes, despite a number of statements he has given out regarding the questioning of new persons in the case and the requestioning of others, is satisfied that the actual shooting of Taylor was done by Edward Sands, Taylor's secretary and valet, who has been missing since the crime.

Sands was seen in Los Angeles the day before the crime and the night after it occurred and police officials throughout this country and several other countries have been searching for him ever since.

Keyes' present investigation is principally based on some minor circumstances indicating that a woman, who is not a motion picture actress, may have been an accomplice to the crime to the extent of conspiring with Sands toward its commission.

Keyes has a thin chain of circumstantial evidence and he admitted to Chicago officials that it was "very thin" implicating the woman he suspects. She is said to have made threats against Taylor after listening to a story told by Sands implicating Taylor and another woman in a romance in which the use of narcotics played a prominent part.

Keyes' theory, upon which he has based his recent questioning of some witnesses and search for several others, is that this woman urged Sands to the commission of the crime and financed his escape.

Sands already had a bitter grudge against Taylor and had written him a letter threatening his life. According to Keyes the woman may have taken advantage of his hatred of Sands for Taylor to bring about the assassination of the latter. [9]

* * * * *

December 22, 1929

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

...Edward Sands, who was Taylor's valet and secretary, has been the principal suspect ever since the murder. He had disappeared shortly before the murder and was sought for stealing some of Taylor's belongings. After Taylor was killed, the search for Sands took on new intensity, but although a score of suspects were picked up, he was never found.

Captain Ray Cato, chief of the police homicide squad, said yesterday that he still believed Sands was the murderer of Taylor.

* * * * *

December 24, 1929

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

...Herman Cline, now retired, was chief of detectives at the time. He said:

"Richards' statement that Asa Keyes blocked the apprehension and prosecution of Taylor's murderer is ridiculous. The convict who told him this story was a dope fiend. Everything possible was done to get at the bottom of the murder and it is my belief to this day that Sands was the murderer."

Capt. E. Ray Cato, who was one of the investigators, likewise stated that all the police records point more strongly to Sands as the killer than to any other person.

A similar expression was uttered by Captain Dave Adams, formerly in the detective bureau at the time of the Taylor murder and who is now a municipal court bailiff.

"I always believed Sands was the murderer," he said.

Lucien Wheeler, former chief of detectives for District Attorney Fitts, revealed that he had spent many months in an attempt to reopen the investigation.

"We reconstructed the entire mystery," said he. "Everything led back to

the same man as the suspected slayer, Edward F. Sands."

Sands' Sexuality

As with Taylor himself, some rumors characterized Sands as a heterosexual Lothario, other rumors characterized Sands as homosexual. If Sands was indeed the killer, those rumors suggest the possibility that Sands' sexuality may have been a factor in the murder, or in his reaction toward Faith MacLean.

Was Sands the Person Seen by Faith MacLean?

Faith MacLean heard the shot that killed Taylor, and then looking out her front door she saw a man shut Taylor's door and walk away. The man she saw was almost certainly the killer, and she stated that although she could not see his face, which was mostly hidden in shadow, she did not think the man was Sands. Are there any reasons why she may have been mistaken, that perhaps it was indeed Sands she saw? Yes--two reasons.

She stated, "It seemed to me he was not so heavy as Sands." [10] Yet the statements issued by the official investigators indicated that Sands had lost substantial weight since he worked for Taylor. When Sands worked for Taylor his weight was nearly 200 lbs.; when he briefly enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard in November 1921 his weight was recorded as 160 lbs. A friend of Sands stated that Sands was trying to reduce his weight to 150 lbs. So at the time of the Taylor murder Sands could have been 40 or 50 lbs. lighter than the way Faith MacLean remembered him, and that difference could have been enough to make her think it was someone else.

She also stated that when she was looking at the man, he saw her and

smiled. "He smiled at me, I could see the corners of his mouth curl in the shadow of his cap. I could not see his face distinctly--not well enough, that is, to distinguish his features." The fact of his smiling is very unusual. The murder has been committed, but the killer has not yet escaped; he is just leaving the scene of the crime when a witness sees him--a witness who may be able to identify him now and/or later. This should be a very stressful moment, not a time for smiling naturally. But if the killer was Sands, it is not difficult to imagine Sands recognizing Faith MacLean, whom he had not seen for seven months, and smiling. Was the killer's smile a smile of personal recognition? A CAST OF KILLERS says that Sands considered himself God's gift to women, he "jumped on anything in a skirt," and that Faith MacLean kept away from him for that reason. [11] Is it possible that the killer's smile was a remembrance of unfulfilled lust, a revived appreciation of her beauty?

The statements of Faith MacLean do not rule out the possibility that Sands was the person she saw.

Was Robbery an Element of the Murder Motive?

Robbery was supposedly eliminated as a murder motive because there was no evidence that any of Taylor's property was taken by the killer. Taylor's diamond ring was still on his finger, and \$78 was in his pocket. Yet:

According to Adela Rogers St. Johns, Mabel Normand told her that Taylor always kept \$5,000 in cash handy. (In 1908, Taylor suddenly felt compelled to abandon everything, change his name, and start over.) The money was in case it became necessary for Taylor to suddenly begin anew again. [12]

According to Marjorie Berger, during her meeting with Taylor on the afternoon before he was killed, he displayed a large roll of bills to her--a roll much larger than the flat \$78 which was found on his body. [13] Taylor made no bank deposit that afternoon, so what happened to the money?

It's possible that Taylor was robbed by the killer; that the killer took only the roll of money because he wanted it to APPEAR that robbery was not the motive; perhaps the killer thought nobody else knew about the \$5,000. How would the killer have known about the money? The logical answer: Sands would have known. If robbery was indeed an element of the murder motive, it greatly increases the probability that Sands was the killer.

Strange Phone Calls Received by Taylor

February 3, 1922

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Phone Used To Badger Taylor

Mysterious telephone calls in the dark hours of the night foreshadowed the murder of William D. Taylor.

This important information was given last night by Julia Crawford Ivers, for eight years scenario writer for the slain man and a close associate of his in the film industry.

"A few weeks before Christmas Mr. Taylor told us at the studio that he was considerably annoyed and mystified by telephone calls late at night. He said he would answer the phone only to find there was no one at the other end of the wire when he responded," Mrs. Ivers said.

"These calls kept on coming at regular intervals, always with the same results. Mr. Taylor said he had not the slightest idea who was calling him or what the purpose was."

Harry Fellows, Mr. Taylor's assistant, confirmed the story. Mr. Taylor told him of these phone calls, he said.

...Mrs. Marjorie Berger said that Mr. Taylor had told her often that he had been getting mysterious phone calls. He talked so funny saying that he had wished sometimes that he had dropped prosecution [of Sands]. Mrs. Berger said: "Why don't you get somebody to watch [your home]?" But he said, "Oh, no."

* * * * *

February 3, 1922

LOS ANGELES RECORD

...Peavey said that Taylor was bothered very often by telephone calls.

He would answer the phone and the party who called would hang up.

Conclusions Regarding Sands

Several times in his life, Sands made very bold moves.

After serving a year at hard labor and being dishonorably discharged from the Navy, he promptly turned around and fraudulently reinlisted--even though discovery could have resulted in another prison term.

He repeatedly reinlisted in the military, essentially defying them to catch him; if he had been caught at the time of his 1921 Coast Guard enlistment he could have been facing four charges of desertion and six charges of fraudulent enlistment, plus forgery and embezzlement charges from his Army enlistment.

After embezzling money from Taylor, and with a Los Angeles warrant for his arrest outstanding, Sands returned to Taylor's home to steal again. He returned yet again, smoking a cigarette on Taylor's doorstep.

It appears that Sands got a defiant pleasure from "returning to the scene of the crime." He repeatedly reinlisted and deserted, and he returned several times to Taylor's home. So Sands could certainly have returned yet again.

Sands pawned Taylor's stolen jewelry using Taylor's true name. Sands wrote the sarcastic note to Taylor and appears to have been the person who was silently harassing Taylor on the telephone. Police detectives expressed the opinion that the main purpose of those telephone calls was to determine if anyone was home; thus the calls were probably made by the same person who committed the burglary of Taylor's home on December 4. In modern terminology,

it appears that Sands was "stalking" Taylor and obtained pleasure from violating Taylor's "space," as evidenced by the note and the dusty footprints on the bed.

There has never been a truly solid reason for dismissing Sands as a prime suspect in Taylor's murder. The most substantial press clipping which seemingly exonerates Sands is the following:

* * * * *

February 11, 1922

OAKLAND TRIBUNE

The Oakland police are today trying to locate E. F. Snyder, a sailor, formerly attached to the revenue cutter Bear, who is believed to be Edward Sands, former valet for William Taylor, murdered film director.

According to information received by Captain of Inspectors Richard McSorley, the man who was known on the cutter as Snyder answered the description of Sands. He joined the crew in Los Angeles on November 21. Ten days later, when the vessel arrived in this city, he was discharged. The police were told that Snyder was seen in the Oakland municipal woodyard within the last ten days. The record at the woodyard shows that he checked out there on February 1.

* * * * *

If Sands was indeed in Oakland on February 1, it would seem to exonerate him of the Taylor murder. But given the substantial number of inaccurate press reports, more authoritative confirmation is needed. It's possible that this report was investigated by the police and discredited. A few weeks after the Taylor murder, L.A.P.D. Detective Sgt. Herman Cline made a trip to San Francisco; reportedly he was there to "run down some local clues" on the Taylor case. [14] After Cline completed his investigation and returned to Los Angeles, he reportedly stated that there would now be a new concentration of police efforts to find Sands. [15]

In the opinion of the experienced detectives who worked on the case,

Edward Sands and Charlotte Shelby were the two prime suspects. Of these two, Sands' physical description much more closely matches the description of the person seen by Faith MacLean, the person she saw leaving Taylor's home moments after the fatal shot was fired.

Sands may have indeed been the killer.

Wallace Smith: February 14, 1922

The following is another of Wallace Smith's sensationalizing dispatches on the Taylor case.

February 14, 1922

Wallace Smith

CHICAGO AMERICAN

One of filmland's leading actresses, the adored darling of thousands of movie fans throughout the country, will be placed under arrest within a week in connection with the murder of William Desmond Taylor, according to a report which came today from as nearly an official source as can be reached in this atmosphere of mystery and official secrecy. [16]

With her will be arrested--and charged directly with the crime, according to the same report--a man high in the moving picture industry and one whose name before today was shielded in the tragic puzzle that has baffled the Los Angeles authorities.

The arrests, it was declared, would bring the sensation of all sensations that have come from Hollywood--an expose of vice and corruption that would bring the films' fantastic world of dreams crashing to solid earth.

Back of the story of the actress and the new man of mystery is said to be a weird narrative of love and an insane jealousy that was known to but few of the film folks, despite the ready facilities for gossip and scandal.

The exact manner in which these newest clues were placed in the hands of the district attorney may not be revealed. It was declared, however, that a chance remark made at a secret rendezvous between the actress and the man under suspicion in a Hollywood modiste's shop started the investigators on their new track.

The actress is known as a woman who for a long time conducted an affair with one of the star producers of moving pictures. [17] This producer, however, was not the man named in the latest report. [18] He was wanted, however, to tell his story of the actress' affairs and especially her association since she took up the morphine habit and became a leader in Hollywood's "dope parties."

News of the prospective arrests was revealed after four new mystery witnesses had been taken to the office of District Attorney Woolwine. There were two men and two women, all known in Hollywood, guarded by detectives.

For more than two hours they were questioned by the district attorney and then rushed into automobiles which rolled them swiftly away from the prosecutor's office. At the home of one of the women, who is said to have overheard the remark in the modiste's shop, no one answered the doorbell when reporters called early today. [19]

District Attorney Woolwine declined to make public the names of the quartet he questioned. Nor would he comment on the progress being made by his investigation.

"This is not a time for talk," he declared, "but for work. Of course I have been able to build up certain theories and we hope certain information brought to us will lead us to the slayer. But we want to get the murderer first--then we'll talk about it."

It was reported that one of the next witnesses to be called will be the veteran producer who was once the sweetheart of the actress named. This man since the tragedy has been sheltered in the bungalow of a friend. From there, it was stated, he has issued instructions to the actress, with whom, despite their ostensible estrangement and many difficulties, he is friendly, instructing her in her conduct.

It was declared that this producer had positive information concerning the infatuation of Taylor for one of the beauties of the films.

Another sensation and another actress were drawn into the kaleidoscope of thrills when more letters were found--these from a pretty motion picture blonde whose chief stock in trade is her portrayals of innocence and her alleged likeness to one of the favorite actresses in the world. [20]

These letters revealed that the young woman, looked upon as a mere child always supposed to be under the chaperonage of her mother, has carried on an impassioned affair with the eccentric director. In such fervent tones were these letters written that the young star's manager had made frantic efforts to insure their recovery or destruction.

With the new developments in the heart of Hollywood itself the federal secret service men did not lag on the trail of the eastern gang of blackmailers and dope peddlers believed to have slain Taylor when he tried to protect one of his many women friends.

The woman supposed to have been a victim of the ring today was reported in a complete state of collapse, unable even to communicate with her servants. Private detectives guarded her home. The federal agents may search the underworld of Chicago and New York, but there still lingers a fear that Taylor's assassin has remained in Los Angeles to complete his fatal errand with the death of the actress.

There was considerable interest shown, too, in the further examination of Taylor's private papers. Actresses and others received various generous sums for no reason explicable by Taylor's check stubs or memoranda. One of those who received regular payments from Taylor--payments of \$200 a week over a protracted period--was a writer well known in Los Angeles as a man who controlled sources of publicity which could be either very valuable or very ruinous to a man in Taylor's position.

Other sums were paid to actresses whose names were never even hinted in connection with the name of Taylor.

These were given added importance because of the discovery of fresh letters, reported in these columns yesterday, which showed that Taylor had

had dealings with gangsters of the bootlegging and dope rings.

Public Administrator Bryson, engaged in going over Taylor's effects, was indignant at what he found.

"Why, they were bleeding him white!" he exclaimed. "Don't you ever forget that Taylor was being robbed by some blackmailers. One of the best theories I have heard to account for his death is that he was killed by one of these human vultures."

The campaign of propaganda to backfire against the conflagration of criticism which has blazed up against Hollywood's wilder set was given new impetus by the entrance of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce into the campaign to "tell the truth about Hollywood."

This policy, strictly adhered to, promised very interesting developments, according to those familiar with the situation.

Do not think for a moment that the wilder set is trying to be less wild, except just for a little while. They have been used to "running things" and they are in no mood to quit. They're sorry for Bill Taylor, and all that. But life must go on and all that sort of thing.

So much so, that one of the largest hotels in Los Angeles has practically taken the law into its own hands to curb the outbursts of the screen idols.

Not so very many weeks ago a group of these riotous merry-makers, loaded with "dope" and booze, began to beat up hotel detectives and uniformed police who sought to quiet them. There was quite a ruckus.

The hotel chief of detectives today issued the following orders to his staff:

"Don't argue with them any more. If one of them so much as pours a drink on top of the table or sniffs a nail full of cocaine in this hotel, hit him over the head with your blackjack and drag him out."

It was learned, too, that but recently the police failed to raid a party that was a disgrace even in Hollywood, although they were informed of the affair in advance. The "party" was given by a titled nobleman and there were some sixty or seventy guests. Several of these were men dressed in women's

clothes. Various minor depravities--minor, that is, in the set--occupied the evening until the piece de resistance was brought in. This was a spectacular entrance. At a signal all the lights in the big studio went out. A spotlight suddenly threw its glare on a wide staircase at the far end of the hall.

Down the stairs minced six men dressed only in underwear. They chanted a funeral dirge in high-pitched voices as they entered. On their shoulders they carried a coffin, which was auctioned off to the highest bidder.

The bidding over, the casket was opened. Its contents may be better imagined than described. Or maybe not. At any rate, they cannot be described in dispatches destined for a newspaper. [21]

NEXT ISSUE: Mini-Reviews: Munn and Martinez
 Did James Kirkwood Kill Taylor?
 Hollywood Social Events 1914-1922
 Wallace Smith: February 15, 1922

NOTES:

[1] The absurd rumor that Edward Sands and Denis Deane-Tanner were the same person has been thoroughly disproven elsewhere. See WDT: DOSSIER, pp. 370, 391-392. In MABEL, Betty Fussell suggests the possibility that Edward Sands was an automobile tire thief, but that was a different Edward Sands, as was verified by the investigators at the time. See LOS ANGELES RECORD (February 3, 1922).

[2] The "alias Jimmy V." letter, a comparison of Snyder/Strathmore/Sands' handwriting, and photos of Snyder taken during his military career can temporarily be found on the Gopher server at pi.la.asu.edu, in the subdirectory: Internet Sampler/Selected Electronic Newsletters/Taylorology/Graphic Image Files for Taylorology.

[3] We can read between the lines and speculate further about the circumstances of Snyder's first desertion. He probably only "borrowed" the car (without the owner's permission), intending to return it unnoticed. But

when the car was wrecked, there was no way to hide what he had done. He probably pleaded with his commander: "I'm really sorry--I know I shouldn't have borrowed the car without asking. But I've had an excellent service record up to this point and am hoping to make the Navy my career. Please don't court-martial me. Give me a second chance." His commander then probably agreed, but only on the condition that Snyder fully pay for the automobile repairs. To which, Snyder perhaps replied, "I don't have that much money here, but I can get it if you will let me make a quick trip to New York--I'll come right back with the money." Snyder left, but the promise to get the money was a bluff--he didn't have it. (In 1922, one of Sands' acquaintances stated he was always broke.) Facing another probable prison term, Snyder probably felt he had no choice but to desert and start over again.

[4] Snyder surely felt he was forced to desert at this time. If the Navy had discovered that Strathmore was really Snyder, it would be just a matter of time before they realized that Snyder was currently wanted as a deserter from the Naval Reserve. Better get out while the gettin's good. Officially, his date of desertion was April 2, 1919.

[5] See NEW YORK HERALD (February 9, 1922).

[6] But since there was almost no profit from the December 4 burglary--the stolen jewelry was pawned by Sands for only \$30--it seems very unlikely that an associate of Sands committed the burglary on Sands' behalf. The dusty footprints on the bed also seem to indicate that the burglar was Sands himself.

[7] The rumor that Sands' body was found in Connecticut has been discredited. See WDT: DOSSIER, p. 396 and HARTFORD COURANT (March 17, 1926).

[8] Concerning Sands' physical description, A CAST OF KILLERS states that Sands was "ugly as a boot." On the contrary, his associates in the Navy described him as "handsome after a fashion" (see HARTFORD COURANT, February 10, 1922) and the photos of Sands taken during his Navy years confirm this description.

[9] The unnamed woman is obviously supposed to be Charlotte Shelby. Since Shelby and Sands were the two most popular suspects, it is only natural that

a theory would arise which would involve them as co-conspirators.

[10] See WDT:DOSSIER, p. 333.

[11] See A CAST OF KILLERS, p. 80.

[12] See THE HONEYCOMB, p. 107.

[13] See LOS ANGELES RECORD (February 17, 1922).

[14] See SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (February 26, 1922).

[15] See SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER (February 27, 1922).

[16] From the material which follows, Smith is clearly referring once again to Mabel Normand.

[17] Mack Sennett.

[18] The identity of the "new man of mystery" is unknown, but an educated guess would be Paul Bern: (a) At the time he held a major executive position at Goldwyn and thus was "a man high in the moving picture industry."

(b) Mabel Normand had been making plans to attend the annual ball of the American Society of Cinematographers, held on February 4, 1922 (see WDT: DOSSIER, p. 268). Bern did attend that ball (Mabel did not, of course), and he may have originally been her date. (c) Bern did escort Mabel to other Hollywood social events.

[19] Reportedly, the two women questioned were "Lady Jane" Lewis, who managed the modiste's shop, and Miss S. O. Lewis. See CHICAGO TRIBUNE (February 14, 1922).

[20] Mary Miles Minter.

[21] Other reports of this incident stated that the coffin contained a "beautiful naked boy." See NEW YORK EVENING WORLD (February 13, 1922).

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.uno.edu/~drif/arbuckle/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>

For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)

* T A Y L O R O L O G Y *
* A Continuing Exploration of the Life and Death of William Desmond Taylor *
* *
* Issue 20 -- August 1994 Editor: Bruce Long *
* TAYLOROLOGY may be freely distributed *

CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE:

Mini-Reviews: Munn and Martinez
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What is TAYLOROLOGY?

TAYLOROLOGY is a newsletter focusing on the life and death of William Desmond Taylor, a top Paramount film director in early Hollywood who was shot to death on February 1, 1922. His unsolved murder was one of Hollywood's major scandals. This newsletter will deal with: (a) The facts of Taylor's life; (b) The facts and rumors of Taylor's murder; (c) The impact of the Taylor murder on Hollywood and the nation. Primary emphasis will be given toward reprinting, referencing and analyzing source material, and sifting it for accuracy.

Mini-Reviews: Munn and Martinez

Two books recently crossed our path for the first time. THE HOLLYWOOD MURDER CASEBOOK was written by Michael Munn, published by St. Martin's Press in 1987, and devotes a 25-page chapter to the Taylor murder ("William Desmond Taylor: The All-Star Murder Mystery", pp. 18-42). The author appears to have made a concerted effort to produce the most error-filled Taylor case recap of all time, blindly accepting and magnifying the errors in previous recaps,

distorting film history, and containing an utter disregard for the facts of the case. This book's chapter on the Taylor case is worthless and should be avoided (except perhaps by Taylor case buffs who might want to engage in a trivia contest to see who can find the most errors). It contributes nothing but disinformation. Aside from the many standard errors and absurd rumors found in recaps of this nature, here are two of the author's exceptional mistakes: He gives the date of the murder as November 1, 1922--nine months after the actual murder date. He also states that perhaps Zelda Crosby killed Taylor. (In reality Crosby committed suicide in New York in 1921, so I assume the author is suggesting that she turned into a zombie, rose from her New York grave, walked across the continent to Los Angeles, and killed Taylor.) On a scale of 0 to 10, this recap gets a 0.

Slightly better is the chapter, "In Those Silent Days," in MURDER IN NORTH AMERICA by Lionel Martinez, published by Wellfleet Press in 1991. The author mentions the Kirkpatrick and Giroux books, and briefly discusses the theories they propound. But much of this recap is still old absurd errors: that Sands and Denis Deane-Tanner were the same person, that Minter was really 30 years old at the time of the murder, that Taylor was shot twice, etc. Characters are still slandered--for example it is stated that after Mabel Normand was knocked out (in 1915), Sennett unceremoniously dumped her body on Fatty Arbuckle's porch. [1] But perhaps because this recap is briefer than the one by Munn, there are far fewer errors. On a scale of 0 to 10, this recap gets a 3.

The Munn and Martinez recaps should both be skipped. For a short recap of the Taylor case, "The Director" in TRUE CRIME: UNSOLVED CRIMES from Time-Life Books (True Crime Series) is still the best yet, far surpassing any other short recaps of the case we have yet encountered.

Did James Kirkwood Kill Taylor?

Leroy Sanderson suggested that perhaps actor/director James Kirkwood was a co-conspirator in Taylor's death, either committing the murder or assisting

Charlotte Shelby.[2] In the decade following the murder, there was never a whisper of suspicion against Kirkwood; his name first surfaced publicly in connection with the case during the 1937 Grand Jury investigation, when Margaret Shelby revealed that Kirkwood had impregnated Mary Miles Minter (resulting in a 1917 abortion), and that Charlotte Shelby had for many years kept love letters written by Kirkwood to Mary.

Reporters went scurrying to locate Kirkwood, and found him acting in a stage play in Michigan. When questioned about the Taylor case, Kirkwood stated: "Looking back fifteen years, I can't even be positive I was in Los Angeles at the time [of Taylor's murder]."[3] This sounds like an evasive answer, but the truth is that Kirkwood traveled a great deal throughout his movie and stage career. He truly could not remember where he was on a specific day so long ago.

But contemporary newspapers do reveal Kirkwood's whereabouts on the night of the murder. In October 1921, he went to Europe, traveling to England, France and Italy, acting in European films like "The Man From Home." On December 18, 1921, the NEW YORK TELEGRAPH reported Kirkwood was in Paris. Other press items indicate that Kirkwood finally returned to the USA on the Aquitania, docking in New York on February 3, 1922--one of his fellow passengers was Cecil B. DeMille. [4]

So two days earlier, at the time of the Taylor murder, James Kirkwood was on an ocean liner in the Atlantic Ocean. He had not been in Hollywood for many months prior to the Taylor murder, and he clearly was not involved in the murder in any way.

When examining the historical material on the Taylor case, it is impossible to determine with certainty who killed Taylor. But it is sometimes possible to determine that certain individuals like James Kirkwood did not kill Taylor.

Hollywood Social Events 1914-1922

The book WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER contains information verifying Taylor's presence at some social activities in early Hollywood. However, then as now, most press attention was focused on the stars and not the directors. So there were many other social events in Hollywood which Taylor probably attended. It is reasonable to assume Taylor was present at most of the following events (all of the items below were datelined from Southern California):

* * * * *

March 21, 1914
MOTOGRAPHY

The Photoplayers Club of Los Angeles held their second annual ball at the huge Shrine Auditorium on St. Valentine's night. It was a brilliant affair in every respect and benefitted the Photoplayers artistically and financially. From the time the band struck the first stirring strains for the impressive grand march with its beautiful women and handsome men and the wonderful dresses to the time the last of the boys returned to the club to discuss the function by the rising sun, there was no hitch with the possible exception that the floor was uncomfortably crowded at times. It is no use giving a list of "those present" for everybody who was anybody "don't you know" graced the ball with his or her august presence.

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March 21, 1914
THE CLIPPER

Nearly two thousand members of the moving picture colony around Los Angeles, Cal., gathered on the evening of Saturday, Feb. 28, 1914 in the large ballroom of the Virginia Hotel, Long Beach, Cal, as the guests of Messrs. H.M. & E.D. Horkheimer, proprietors of "Balboa Feature Films" the event being an invitation celebration of the opening of the extension of the Balboa studios at Long Beach, Cal. Prominent players, producers and camera men engaged in dancing until the small hours of the morning, and special electric cars conveyed those who lived in Los Angeles to their destination, from the beach city.

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September 20, 1914

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The Photoplayers' Club is looking up and the supper last Wednesday was splendidly attended. Larry Peyton, recently returned from San Diego, was in the chair, and a capital programme was provided. The well-known actor, Howard Scott, was the guest of honor.

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October 11, 1914

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

We had a great supper at the Photoplayers' Club last Wednesday, although the pleasures were tintured with some reserve, for it was virtually a good-bye dinner to Henry Walthall, who is leaving for the East. How we do hate to see him go, for Wally is one of the most lovable of fellows as well as being an accomplished motion picture actor. We made it very clear to him that he was leaving some good pals behind.

* * * * *

November 9, 1914

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The Photoplayers held their first annual gambol at the Mason Friday and Saturday nights, and there was a collection of stars and near-stars, behind and before the footlights, that would have made the most blase press agent weep for joy.

Everybody in filmland was there, and the lobby was a veritable florist shop, while eager men sought to buy candy, flowers and programmes from the host of leading ladies and ingenues that seemed nearly unable to supply the demand. Film heroes and heroines stepped from the portrait frames with a cordiality that gave the whole affair an informal touch and made it such a splendid success. Miss Laura Oakley, Chief of Police of Universal City, kept the enormous crowd moving in the already packed theatre.

The audience was nearly as interesting as the show itself. It included Isadore Bernstein, Mayor of Universal City; Mabel Van Buren, Beatrice Van,

Vera Sisson, Anna Little, Dorothy Davenport, Bessie Eyton, Edith Johnson, Elsie Greeson, Enid Markey, Leona Hutton, Stella Razeto, the Gish sisters, Cleo Madison, Grace Cunard, Mabel Normand, Carlyle Blackwell, Billy Stowell, George Periolot, Donald Crisp, Bobby Harron, William Clifford, Herbert Rawlinson, James Singleton, Wallace Reid, J. Warren Kerrigan, Harry Carter, Tom Mix, Sidney Smith, Cortenay Foote and D. W. Griffith. There were many others in evening dress making the rounds of the boxes greeting friends and admirers.

Tom Wilson opened the song programme with original parodies that held the audience from the start. His appearance in blackface was a disappointment, as every one wanted to see him as he appeared on the screen.

In excellent voice and with a choice collection of semi-classical songs, Myrtle Stedman of Bosworth, Inc., earned the plaudits of the audience.

Then came Ben Deeley with his famous "Good Old Common Sense" song, and scored a hit. He was called to give an encore, and sang his latest popular success, "My Heart's Way Out in California," which he put over in a fashion that finally forced him to make a short speech, which was a gem in itself.

"Discovered," a short sketch, featuring Kathlyn Williams and a group of Selig Players, was replete with tense situations, and the comedy climax surprised and delighted every one. Miss Williams was ably assisted by Guy Oliver, Wheeler Oakman, Charles Clary, and Jack McDonald. The act was superb, every one scored a personal success. Mr. Clary as the friend, and Mr. Oakman as the husband, were especially good, easily maintaining their reputations behind the footlights that they have gained before the camera.

Max Asher with a patter act assisted by a pack of cards, showed a dexterity with the pasteboards that won him instant favor. In faultless evening clothes and grand opera voice, Wm. Worthington rendered operatic selections to good advantage.

George Cohan's first sketch, with its laughable lines, was offered with great success by Filson & Errol, who gave it the first production, and from the way the house enjoyed it proved that it has not outgrown popularity. "The Tip on the Derby" was very good.

After the intermission Ruth Roland, assisted by Harry McCoy at the piano, proceeded to stop the show, the audience not being satisfied till the supes brought the piano back and the pair sang another song. Miss Roland left nothing to be desired either in her singing or her gowns, and the patter of the act brought one continuous roar of laughter.

Charley Murray, of Murray & Mack, offered a monologue up to his usual standard, and was given a big hand.

"The Sheriff of the Shasta," that Theodore Roberts made famous, was offered with a cast that made the sketch far superior to its presentation in vaudeville. Mr. Roberts is always good and, as the sheriff, he was a delight. Miss Smythe, the only one of the original case, was equal to bearing the only female role of the piece, and her scenes with Mr. Roberts were in her usual inimitable manner. Murdock McQuarrie, as the jealous husband, and Hobart Bosworth, as the acrobat, played these parts as only such actors of sterling quality are able.

Lydia Yeamans Titus, with songs and character studies, fully contributed to the enjoyment of the affair.

The Oz Film Company presented Violet McMillan, Frank Moore and Fred Woodward. Miss McMillan has often been compared to a doll and, as she dances like a sprite, her success was always assured. Woodward and Moore were great, and "Hank" is a favorite wherever he goes. This trio presented one of the cleverest acts on the programme, while one of the best dancing teams in vaudeville closed a show that will be always be remembered and a credit to the photo-players.

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November 22, 1914
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The Photoplayers Club has taken on new life with a vengeance. Last Wednesday night the supper had a bumper attendance, and Carl Laemmle was among "those present." The members have raised bonds among themselves to the tune of over \$2,000, and this, with the \$1,200 raised by the vaudeville performance, has cleared the club of debt and placed it on a good footing

again. Apart from this the right spirit has again been infused into the club, and its future is of the brightest. On Saturday a tango supper will be held, and the ladies have promised to be there in force. Good!

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November 29, 1914
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Theodore Roberts was the chairman at the Photo-Players weekly supper, and there was a bumper attendance. Next week Fred Kley, of the Lasky studios, will be the chairman, and he is a mighty popular man in the colony. Big preparations are already being made regarding the annual ball to be held in February, and all the members are giving their services free of charge. The result can only be one way. The club is stronger today than ever before.

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December 6, 1914
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

At a big Thanksgiving dance held at Venice, Barney Sherry, of Inceville, and Mabel Normand, of the Keystone, led the grand march. It was a great evening and a number of motion picture stars were present.

At the weekly dinner at the Photo-Player's Club Fred Kley, the popular studio manager for the Lasky forces, was chairman and there was an overflowing house. William De Mille and Oscar Apfel were present and William made a witty and interesting speech--very much in favor of the picture game.

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January 24, 1915
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

There are no available figures as to how many people attended the ball at Shrine Auditorium, given in honor of Mary Pickford by the exhibitors of Los Angeles [on Saturday, January 16]. At 9 o'clock the auditorium was packed, and outside was a crowd larger than the one inside. The line stretched for blocks, and traffic was impossible. There were automobiles of every size, age and description.

Before the arrival of the guest of honor an exhibition of fancy ballroom

dancing was given by a clever team. Immediately after the coronation ceremony the grand march started, led by Carlyle Blackwell and Dorothy Gish, and all of the photoplayers participated, while the spotlight in the balcony played on the screen artists.

At 11 o'clock the crowd outside was still gathering, and as a few of the spectators were leaving, some of the patient ones were admitted, and by 12 o'clock there was an entire new set of faces in the balcony, but at that hundreds were unable to obtain admission.

Among those who it was possible to see were Donald Crisp and Al Kauffman, of the Famous Players; Jesse Lasky, of the Lasky Company; Isadore Bernstein, of the Universal; Victoria Forde, Rene Rogers, Ruth Roland, Dorothy and Lillian Gish, Francelia Billington, Lucille Young, Gypsy Abbott, Mrs. Russell E. Smith, Laura Oaklay, Stella Razeto, Helen Leslie, Agnes Vernon, Robert Harron, Henry King, William Stowell, George Periolat, Lee Moran, Christy Cabanne, Al E. Christie, R.E. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Wing, Ray Gallagher, and a host of others.

There were many beautiful gowns, especially the one worn by Miss Gish.

The ball was a splendid success and a credit to the exhibitors of Southern California.

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January 31, 1915
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The second annual ball of the Static Club was held Wednesday evening, January 20. Margarita Fischer, wonderfully gowned in a creation of white satin brocaded in silver and carrying a huge bouquet of American beauties, led the grand march with Robert Leonard.

Lights of all shades decorated the hall and motion pictures of the grand march and some of the dances were taken. Filmdom gathered to do honor to the camera boys and the attachment between players and the men behind the camera was made stronger by adding another link to the chain of their friendship.

There were some beautiful gowns that attracted much applause, and the picture players more than earned the reputation as being of the best dressed

profession.

Among those that attended were Isadore Bernstein, Mayor of Universal City; Fred Balshofer of the Sterling Company, Abe Sterns of the L-Ko, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Dillon, Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Clifton, Victoria Forde, Eugenie Forde, Rena Rogers, Connie Johnson, Virginia Chester, Marie Walcamp, Vera Sisson, Mrs. McCoy, Penny Ferol, Lee Moran, Thomas Santschi, Tom Mix, Mr. Forde, Harry Pollard, J. Farrell McDonald, Harry McCoy, Beverly Griffith and many others.

The reception committee were Leonard M. Smith, William Alder, Walter T. Griffin, Enrique Vallejo and D.K. Gray. The members of the club were there to the last man, and they are all to be congratulated for the splendid manner in which the affair was handled.

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April 4, 1915
LOS ANGELES TIMES

The Film Club, composed of some hundred motion-picture actors of Southern California, will give a ball at the Hotel Potter, Santa Barbara, the evening of May 28.

Lottie Pickford and Irving Cummings, stars of the "Diamond in the Sky" serial, now being shown at the Woodley, will appear in a special dance.

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May 29, 1915
SANTA BARBARA PRESS

An attendance considerably smaller than had been anticipated attended the Film Club ball last night in the palm room of the Hotel Potter. There were less than 100 percent, and several film stars who had promised to be there failed to put in an appearance. Those who were there enjoyed themselves, nevertheless. Music was furnished by Hester's orchestra.

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July 9, 1916
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The Directors' Association, a new Coast organization composed entirely

of directors and their assistants, gave a very nice party at the Alexandria this week in the shape of a beefsteak dinner. The new club is purely for social purposes and they will have clubrooms in the Alexandria, where the boys can go and play pinochle and tell each other how much they like their pictures. The chief director is Otis Turner of the Universal, his assistant is Allen Curtis of the same company and the man who looks after the expenses account is Eddie Dillon.

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March 3, 1917

LOS ANGELES HERALD

Motion picture directors held a banquet at the Athletic club Thursday night [March 1].

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June 1917

PHOTOPLAY MAGAZINE

A ball game rivaling in interest only that historic battle which destroyed the mighty Casey took place in Los Angeles' Washington Park on Saturday afternoon, March 31. The screen Tragics were up against the screen Comics. The Comics' lineup was as follows: Charles Chaplin, p.; Eric Campbell, c; Charles Murray, 1b; Slim Summerville, 2b; Bobby Dunn, ss; Hank Mann, 3b; Lonesome Luke [Harold Lloyd], lf; Ben Turpin, rf; Chester Conklin, cf. In the same order of position, the Tragics were Wallace Reid, William Desmond, George Walsh, 'Gene Pallette, Antonio Moreno, Franklyn Farnum, Jack Pickford, George Beban and Hobart Bosworth. Umpire and referee: Barney Oldfield and James J. Jeffries. The carnage was terrible. In the blood, dust and grand confusion the game broke up after two innings, and the Lord knows who won. The one really dreadful holocaust was the fanning of Wallie Reid-- just as at least a thousand chickens had risen in the bleachers to give him the Chautauqua salute. George Walsh, a former pro, slammed the ball clear out of sight for a real home run. Chaplin pushed the sphere into the bleachers, and beat it straight across the diamond to second and back. Barney Oldfield properly called it a foul, whereat Barney was rolled in the dirt by fifty

Keystone cops; after which, rising, he admitted that, owing to a superiority of numbers, he was forced to change his decision. [This baseball game was a benefit for the Red Cross.]

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July 29, 1917
E.V. Durling
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

One of the finest tributes ever paid to a dramatic critic was the Maitland Davies Memorial Benefit held Sunday night at the Mason Opera House. Davies, who was the dramatic critic of the Los Angeles Tribune, died last week, and left his family in rather poor circumstances. The profession led by Guy Price, dramatic editor of the Los Angeles Herald, quickly rallied to the aid of the family, and the result was a performance which probably will never again be equaled anywhere.

Charles Chaplin, Theda Bara, Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford and W.S. Hart appeared in person. Blanche Ring, Tyrone Power, Julian Eltinge, Louise Glaum, L.K. Anspacher, Carl Randall, Elsa Ruegger, Flanagan & Edwards, Dainty Marie, Kathleen Clifford, Bessie Barriscale, Grace Travers and Charlie Winniger also did their bit.

All in all it was a wonderful benefit, and a very good sum was realized for the Davies family.

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December 7, 1917
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The Club of Forty gave its second dance this week, and it was even better than the first. George Beban showed the boys how a Russian solo dance should be executed. The news went around the town that the Club of Forty was giving a dance, and about 500 of the native sons gathered to see the crowd come out. They waited seven hours, but it was worth it. Flo Ziegfeld and Charley Dillingham would have broken down and sobbed like children to see so much beauty on view free of charge.

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March 13, 1918
Antony Anderson
LOS ANGELES TIMES

The titanic task of preparation is ended. The great play is finished. The modern epic--the tremendous story of love and war--was swiftly flashed, last night, before a vast assembly of men and women at Clune's Auditorium, an assembly thrilled and exalted by the gripping power, the overwhelming beauty and the poignant pathos of David Wark Griffith's masterpiece in photoplay, "Hearts of the World."

The tale was told, not in words but in motion pictures. The newest of the arts--destined, perhaps, to become one of the greatest of them all--spoke to our souls through our eyes, which are the windows of the soul, windows washed clean and clear, on this occasion at least, with tears wrung from our very hearts.

...Clune's Auditorium was packed as full as it could hold--packed full and overflowing....The theatrical world was represented by many of its leading directors and stars--Jesse L. Lasky, Cecil de Mille, William de Mille, Jeanie McPherson, Wallace Reid, Dorothy Dalton, Mary Pickford, Jack Pickford, Thomas H. Ince, Lillian and Dorothy Gish, William Desmond, Julian Johnson, Texas Guinan, Marshall Neilan, Edith Storey, Blanche Sweet, Sessue Hayakawa, Tsura Aoki, Lois Weber, Phillips Smalley, Olive Thomas, Jack Conway, Viola Dana, Anita King, H.D. Horkheimer, Mary McLaren, Joseph DeGrasse, Ida May Park, Chet Withey, Douglas Fairbanks, Charlie Chaplin, Douglas MacLean, Sid Chaplin, Mack Sennett, and scores of others.

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June 9, 1918
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The first meeting of the newly formed Motion Picture War Service Association held in Clune's Auditorium, Los Angeles, last Sunday [May 25], clearly demonstrated just how the film colony feels about getting behind the man behind the gun. The meeting was restricted to the people associated with the motion picture industry and they did away with all fancy preliminaries

and got right down to business. A constitution was adopted and D. W. Griffith was elected chairman of the governing board. Mack Sennett was elected treasurer, and S.E.V. Taylor, secretary. Others selected for the board were Lois Weber, Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, William S. Hart, Marguerite Clark, Maurice Tourneur, Cecil B. Demille, J.S. Dawley, S.M. Rothapfel, Lee Ochs, J. Gordon Edwards, Henry McRae, Frank Woods, G.W. Bitzer and William D. Taylor.

Mr. Griffith put the well-known speech of Patrick Henry far in the background for a starter. He was followed by Lois Weber, who appealed to the women in the industry. Cecil De Mille then spoke and started a fund for the purchase of a hospital with 1,000 beds to be presented to the Government by the motion picture industry. This will cost, it is expected, \$185,000.

Mary Pickford stepped upon the platform with her smile for the moment laid aside for a determined expression. Portia was never in it with Mary. She had the crowd crying, sighing and laughing in turns, but always at the right time. She autographed membership ticket number one for the association, and sold it to Dustin Farnum for \$2,500.

Charlie Chaplin then arose and announced he was ready to do anything, even sing if requested. All the crowd wanted was to see Charlie walk, being kind of suspicious regarding his anxiety to sing. Charlie did and then, not to be outdone by Mr. Farnum, bought a membership ticket and paid \$2,600. Mack Sennett paid \$2,400 for Clara Kimball Young's autographed ticket, Mr. Griffith bought Mae Murray's for \$2,500, Sessue Hayakawa gave \$2,000 for Cecil De Mille's, Phillips Smalley \$2,000 for Lois Weber's, Henry McRae \$1,000 for Mack Sennett's, Douglas Fairbanks \$2,500 for Marguerite Clark's, Fannie Ward paid \$2,500 for Frank Keenan's and Frank turned right around and bought Fannie's for the same price. Harry Sherman paid \$2,750 for Dustin Farnum's. Altogether some \$40,000 was raised in this fashion.

Charlie Murray acted as auctioneer, and needless to say his remarks alone were worth the money.

The idea of the War Service organization originated with the Motion Picture Directors' Association, who of late have devoted all their meetings

to the war questions and have done much to demonstrate just to what extent the motion picture industry is behind the United States and her allies in the present crisis.

This meeting is only the beginning. It will be followed by a series of the greatest benefits ever staged and in addition to this many other money raising efforts will be put forth by the Motion Picture War Service Association.

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June 10, 1918
Grace Kingsley
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Tremendous financial success attended the show given at the Lasky studio last Saturday night [June 8], by various members of the acting profession, for the benefit of the families of United States soldiers and sailors, who formerly were members of the Lasky organization. A sum amounting to nearly \$9000 was taken in, and as all the articles sold were donated, and as stars likewise donated their services, said sum was clear.

Many articles were auctioned off. Among others, Clara Kimball Young, who appeared in evening dress and wearing a magnificent hat, auctioned off her wearing apparel, delivering the hat and gloves at first hand, and thereafter retiring behind a screen, over the top of which she sold her dress and some other garments, and whence she emerged following the sale, mysteriously clad in street clothes.

Charlie Chaplin purchased a bit of lingerie for \$80, and thereafter wore it about his neck.

Douglas Fairbanks offered to box Kid McCoy, but the fight closed after the second round for the simple reason that Mr. Fairbanks, in the heat of the contest, fell into the swimming pool on the platform adjoining which the dance was held.

Mrs. Lillian Brockwell gathered in money to the amount of about \$200--up to the point, in fact, when the footbridge across the little stream beyond which her candy booth was situated fell in owing to the heavy traffic.

The bar, which was presided over by William S. Hart, and his cowboys, took in a small fortune, and Sister Mamie Hart sat near by as a sort of guardian angel to see that nobody drank too much, but even at that Fred Stone reeled away following his fifth chocolate ice cream soda. Antony Anderson offered to help Bill Hart at the bar, but after drinking three out of five drinks himself, was discharged. However, as he led scores of his own and Hart's admirers up to the brass rail, his lapse was overlooked.

Booths were presided over by Lillian Gish, Dorothy Gish, Gladys Brockwell, Edna Earle, Mary O'Connor, Loyola O'Connor, Constance Talmadge, Carmel Myers, Winifred Kingston and many others.

Mme. Aldrich contributed a dignified patriotic flavor to the occasion by singing "The Star Spangled Banner."

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September 1918

Frederick James Smith

MOTION PICTURE CLASSIC

Out in Los Angeles some weeks ago they staged a bazaar for a war benefit. Blanche Sweet sold flowers, Doug Fairbanks and Kid McCoy contributed a boxing match, Bill Hart acted as bartender, selling soft drinks only, and so on. But, most important, Clara Kimball Young retired behind a screen and auctioned off her garments, piece by piece. These garments, fresh from "her warm, pulsating body," as the auctioneer remarked, went to the highest bidders. For the benefit of posterity, we record the purchasers, as far as neutral observers were able to recall:

Gown, to Tally, Los Angeles exhibitor.

Stockings, to Cecil DeMille.

Corsets, to Elliott Dexter.

---- (slightly censored) ----, to Bill Hart.

Please read these lines slowly.

---- (censored) ----, to Doug Fairbanks.

---- (heavily censored) ----, to Charlie Chaplin for \$185.

* * * * *

[Taylor was in the British Army between August 1918 and April 1919, and was absent from Los Angeles during that time.]

July 6, 1919

Margaret Ettinger

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The Motion Picture Directors' Association had a big entertainment the other evening in the grill room of the Hotel Alexandria. A cabaret opened the evening show and was followed by a speech given by Joseph Scott, a well-known attorney, who addressed the audience on the power of the motion picture and the relation of the directors to it. Carter de Haven and his wife gave an exhibition dance.

Besides all the colony directors those present were: Douglas Fairbanks, Roscoe Arbuckle, Maurice Tourneur, W. H. Clune, Sid Grauman, F. McGrew Willis, Milton Hoffman, Carl Laemmle and Harry Kline.

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July 13, 1919

Margaret Ettinger

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The Brentwood Country Club on Saturday, July 5, and Sunday, July 6, was the site of much festivity. The club was given over to the motion picture industry and the members of the colony were bidden to come and show their prowess on the club's golf course. I drove out in the afternoon with Sarah Mason and S.P. Trood and arrived at the course just in time to see Victor Schertzinger had been victor (no pun intended) in the morning's game, and had won the loving cup donated by O. C. Kingsley.

Goldwyn certainly shone in the morning's contest with Vic copping first and Rex Taylor winning second prize. In the afternoon Joe Morgan of Brentwood "came up smiling." He won a gorgeous loving cup. Wallie Reid was one of the Laskyites who made a wondrous score on Saturday and grabbed a prize on Sunday. King Vidor did likewise and George Melford came so near getting one

of those cups that we--well we just held our breath. Colin Campbell was out both days, and so was Neil Burns and the Flannagan and Edwards team.

On Saturday night the club was given over to the motion picture folk and their families and a dinner dance was staged.

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December 7, 1919
Margaret Ettinger
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The biggest social event in the motion picture world came on Thanksgiving eve when the Directors' Ball was given in the Rose Room of the Alexandria. This ball, an annual one, is the only occasion during the year when stars and directors from all studios hobnob for an evening's pleasure and exhibit their best Parisian gowns and formal evening clothes.

This year the ball proved even bigger than before. Some said because there had been no ball last year, on account of the war. Others because more motion picture people were on the Coast than at any other time. At any rate, it was a grand and glorious success both financially and socially.

Supper was served in the grill and midnight and two jazz orchestras strummed dance music from 10 till dawn.

Some of those present were Pauline Starke, Bebe Daniels, Nazimova, Charles Bryant, Bessie Barriscale, Howard Hickman, Pauline Frederick, Tom Moore, Edna Purviance, Charles Ray, Betty Blythe, Mr. and Mrs. Mahlon Hamilton, William Russell, Mary Miles Minter, Marcia Manon, B. R. Frothingham, Wanda Hawley, Wallace MacDonald, Viola Dana, Bert Lytell, Alice Lake, Jack Pickford, Antonio Moreno, Herbert Howe, Mabel Condon, Grace Kingsley, Anna Q. Nilsson, Lew Cody, Douglas Gerrard, Lynn Reynolds, Frank Lloyd, Reginald Barker, Clara Williams, Mr. and Mrs. Maxwell Karger and Roscoe Arbuckle.

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December 28, 1919
Margaret Ettinger
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

On the evening of December 23 the local office of Realart gave a dinner to Arthur Kane. All the press were present, and besides that, Mary Miles Minter, her mother, Mrs. Shelby, and her director, William Desmond Taylor.

* * * * *

February 22, 1920

Margaret Ettinger

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The Wallace Reid ball was held in the Hotel Alexandria on February 12 in behalf of the Theatrical Charities Fund. A host of favorites were there, including Viola Dana, Shirley Mason, Bebe Daniels, Kathlyn Williams, Bryant Washburn, Bessie Love, Bert Lytell, William Russell and many more. The hostesses were Mrs. Wallace Reid and Mary Miles Minter.

* * * * *

February 21, 1920

LOS ANGELES EXPRESS

The American Legion kept its faith with those who died; will you break faith with those who live?

It is so easy to forget; will you remember?

Tonight you will have the opportunity to show whether yours is a memory or a "forgettery."

If you remember those who died and keep the faith with those who live you will be "among those present" tonight at the benefit entertainment to be given by the Los Angeles post, No. 8, American Legion, at Clune's Auditorium.

The American Legion has never asked you for a donation. It does not now. It offers you a better show than you can see anywhere else in this city for the money. The performers are topnotchers. But that is not all. They will work tonight with a patriotic urge. It will be their way of keeping faith.

Give this program a look:

1. Opening--"Memories"
2. "A Bit of Life," Will Rogers.
3. "From the Orient," Miss Margaret Loomis, danseuse.
4. Miss Bebe Daniels and her jazz band.

5. "Five Minutes," Mary Miles Minter.
6. Mana Zucca, pianist.
7. "Imperial Russian Ballet School," Theodore Kosloff and Vera Fredowa.
 - (a) "Romance of Russian Winter," Vera Fredowa.
 - (b) "Valse," Gladys Conrad and Flower Huger.
 - (c) "Russian Peasant Dance," Theodore Kosloff, Vera Fredowa,
assisted by Ivan with Balalaika.
8. Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra.

The entertainment was promoted by S. F. Schumacher, assistant secretary of the post, with Marshall Zeno in charge of general arrangements and Van Zimmerman arranging the program.

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May 2, 1920
Margaret Ettinger
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Tiajuana, Mexico, and Raymond Hitchcock's "Hitchy Koo" vied for screen honors last week. On Sunday we glimpsed at the former place, Viola Dana, Lottie Pickford, Teddy Sampson, Ormer Locklear, Mr. and Mrs. Tom Mix, Stuart Holmes, Bennie Leonard, Charles Christie, Leatrice Joy, Walter McGrail, Jack Gilbert, Roscoe Arbuckle, Julius Stern, Sophie Bernard, Lou Anger, J. Gordon Cooper and scores more in the profession.

Monday night's opening of "Hitchy Koo" found Thomas Meighan, Frances Ring, Jack Pickford, Olive Thomas, Mabel Normand, Tom Mix, Franklyn Farnum, Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Nagel, Sylvia Breamer, Rosemary Theby, Lew Cody, Reggie Morris, Mr. and Mrs. William Seiter, Fritzi Ridgeway and Antonio Moreno at Hitchy's show.

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February 6, 1921
Frances Agnew
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The members of the American Society of Cinematographers proved Saturday night that they can be just as successful as hosts as they are at "shooting."

To the allied cameramen goes the blue ribbon for staging the first motion picture ball of the year and the first motion picture gathering at the new Ambassador Hotel. It was the society's second annual ball, attended by all the celebrities of filmland, including stars, directors, producers and technical folk.

The ballroom was attractively decorated with flowers, with special stress laid by the cameramen on their forte, lighting. Varied colored spotlights played on the dancers throughout the evening and early morning hours. The boxes around the ballroom were occupied by the leading stars and directors of cinemaland, among the boxholders having been Mary Pickford, May Allison, Roscoe Arbuckle, George Melford, Gloria Swanson, Louis Gasnier, Mary Miles Minter, William Hart, Pauline Frederick, Madame Nazimova, Sid Grauman, James Kirkwood and all the leading stars.

* * * * *

May 1921

Cal York (Adela Rogers St. Johns)

PHOTOPLAY

The American Society of Cinematographers (which Fatty Arbuckle says is French for cameramen) gave a ball at the new Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles the other evening that was quite THE social event of the season, pictorially speaking.

Roscoe Arbuckle helped lead the orchestra part of the evening and did very well, but his prize performance of the night, to my way of thinking, was the last dance, which he had with a lovely little Follies girl. The rotund comedian had had a hard day, apparently, the evening had been long--and rather wet--and Roscoe went to sleep on the floor, resting his head gently against his partner's rosy cheek and continuing to move his feet occasionally to the music. If they covered more than six feet the whole dance, San Francisco is a suburb of New York.

Pauline Frederick had a box, which she shared with her mother and some friends, including her very constant attendant, J. Allen Boone, head of the western organization of Robertson-Cole. Polly looked gorgeous in white, and

was as cordial and charming as ever.

May Allison was her next door neighbor, surrounded as usual by so many black coats her pretty blonde head only appeared occasionally to the gaze of the multitudes.

Jim Kirkwood was the sensation of the evening, for when he appeared on the floor wearing his long, silky yellow beard--grown for his part in "The Money Master"---there was an absolute gasp of horror over the room. Jim had Lois Wilson with him, and danced a lot of dances with her. Lois looked very "debutante" in a pale blue taffeta frock and, as usual, maintained her dignity throughout the evening.

Tommie Meighan and his wife, Frances Ring, were there. Tommie doesn't dance--or at least he didn't--but Mrs. Meighan, in a lace and satin frock with long lines didn't lack partners, believe me. "My Frances," as Tommie calls her, is a stunning person in evening gown.

Nazimova, in a yellow satin costume made exactly like a hula dancer's flitted in with her husband for a few moments and gave the spectators a treat by dancing twice, giving likewise a very good imitation of a hula. Also, she provided the laugh of the evening by issuing positive orders to the ballroom committee that, if she condescended to come, no one should be presented to her. No one was. And the party seemed to ramble on just the same.

Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Reid were guests of May Allison. Bessie Barriscale--who in spite of having a son as tall as she is--was there looking like an ingenue at her first ball.

Madame Elinor Glyn, in the most beautiful gown in the room, and an emerald headdress and necklace, caused something of a sensation. She dances very beautifully and I saw her and Rupert Hughes stepping several measures with evident gusto.

Gloria Swanson, with fewer clothes on than I have ever seen in a public place, was there, too, so beautiful that she outshone her old self. She wore something made of black jet beads.

I don't think it was a queen of Sheba costume, Betty Blythe wore--she was there with her husband, Paul Scardon--but it was magnificent enough to

be.

Mary Alden had a box party, I think; anyway I saw her in black as usual and among the rest of the guests were Mildred Harris, in crimson and gold, with her hair built in a pyramid, accompanied by Herbert Rawlinson, King and Florence Vidor, Doris May and Wallace MacDonald, Penrhyn Stanlaws, Colleen Moore in a most fetching silver frock, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Mulhall, Jack Donavan, Darrell Foss, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Meredith, and oh, yes, I almost forgot, Mrs. Gertrude Atherton, Bryant Washburn, Mr. and Mrs. Earle Williams, Cullen Tate, Mr. and Mrs. Pat O'Malley, and I think I saw Helen Jerome Eddy floating about.

Anyway, it was a grand party and everybody seemed to have the time of their lives.

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May 1921

PHOTOPLAY

...And we can now present to you--Mr. and Mrs. Tom Moore.

Tom Moore and Renee Adoree met in New York New Year's Eve.

They were married in Beverly Hills, California, on February 12th.

...They were married, in the lovely drawing room of Tom Moore's home in Beverly Hills, just at noon. Nice, fat, jolly Judge Summerfield married them, and Mabel Normand was maid of honor, and Jack Pickford was best man. Dear old Mrs. Moore, mother of the Moores, was the only guest present.

...Afterwards they drove to a famous Inn in Pasadena, where a bridal breakfast was served for forty of their friends, among them May Allison, Alice Lake, Edna Purviance, Mr. and Mrs. Mahlon Hamilton, Lottie Pickford, Teddy Sampson, Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Robertson, Mr. and Mrs. Cedric Gibbons, and the bridal party.

Everybody drank the bride's health--in the stuff that runs under bridges, we suppose--and they motored away in a cloud of rice, and blessings to Santa Barbara, Del Monte, San Francisco and finally took ship to Honolulu, where they spent a three weeks honeymoon.

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February 14, 1921

Grace Kingsley

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Who says we can't Mardi Gras? We not only can but do, oh, fluently! It was a prize pow-wow, that Saturday night Mardi Gras at the Ambassador.

We used to fiesta when our City Council and Chamber of Commerce felt a mood of joyous abandon coming on; but never in our palmiest days did we fiesta as we Mardi Gras'd Saturday night. Probably a part of the difference is due to the fact we have movie stars these days, and how the movies do make things move, to be sure.

Of course it was a Mardi Gras with the meter on, so to speak. Though there may have been gentlemen with enlarged hips on the place, there were no hip-hip-hoorays consequent thereon. Even Dick Ferris's service station apparently had not been tempered with. But even without any fine old Southern gentlemen with heir fine old whisky breats, we managed to Mardi Gras with vim and vigor.

It wasn't a mild Mardi Gras, at that. How could it be, with one of Pavlowa's wildest Russian steppers in our midst? Three times did her partner toss her aloft on his shoulder, and it's said that a couple of stars nearly did the cat-step! So there! And if you don't believe we were plumb devilish, you should have seen the boy dressed in girl's clothes, and--I'm glad you asked me that, dearie--last tights clear to his hips!

Mary Pickford looked lovely in a pale blue silk, and with Douglas Fairbanks, helped to entertain the crowds who gathered around the two. We thought maybe Doug would do a stunt, but he had a sore hand, so he couldn't hop over anything.

Mary Miles Minter was there with Mother Charlotte Shelby, looking beautiful in a simple shepherdess costume of pink and white satin helping to put the "Mar" in Mardi Gras.

Mildred Harris as Juliet had no particular Romeo; she played the field.

Rudolpho Valentino wore a Spanish cavalier's costume, but no mask. Somebody suggested he couldn't bear to be out of the public eye that long.

Oh, but there were some devils present! Some dressed for the part, some not. Take Wally Reid, for instance. That nonchalant gentleman didn't bother about advertising. He just wore evening clothes. Besides, he was in a protective mood. Had he not brought Mary McIvor Desmond?

Mitchell Lewis just put on one of his regular Canuck costumes and romped around. He wore no dagger, so he was sufficiently disguised. Tom Mix disguised himself by leaving off his checked overcoat.

Harold Lloyd and Mildred Davis wore evening clothes, and found they danced so nicely together they didn't bother dancing with anybody else. Anyhow, what could be sweeter.

Larry Semon had parked his comedy make-up and wore the moonlights; and lovely Lucille Carlisle, just to show there was no hard feeling, any more, was the partner of his terpsichorean joys and sorrows, looking very spankable in a kid outfit.

Al Kauffman neatly held up the tail of his claw-hammer coat, when he danced, and Charlie Murray was a hot tamale in a vaquero outfit.

Even the Governor made a speech and said it was the best Mardi Gras ball he had ever seen and that he was something of an expert at that. So you can see for yourself that a good time was had by all.

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June 1921

Cal York (Adela Rogers St. Johns)

PHOTOPLAY

Everybody in Hollywood was at the Washington's Birthday races at the Los Angeles speedway, when Ralph dePalma cleaned up one of the most thrilling speed races ever won.

May Allison had a box--and a box party, consisting mostly of men, as far as we could see. May always has a regular attendant group of young men--but she agrees with Elinor Glyn that stars shouldn't marry so I guess it's quite hopeless. Her sister was acting as chaperone.

Tom and Nell Ince were there--with their oldest boy, who nearly fell out of the box with excitement. I heard a dozen people speaking about how well

Mrs. Ince is looking. She had on a marvellous sable coat and the smartest little blue bonnet-hat. Jackie Saunders was in their box, in a suit of blue duvetyn, with a collar of marten. Jackie certainly believes in short and convenient skirts. And she has at least two perfectly good reasons.

Mabel Normand arrived just as the race was starting, looking as fat and sassy as she did five years ago. Most of the western film colony hadn't seen her since her rest cure, and everybody had to run over and congratulate her. Characteristically, Mabel had picked up some small urchin on the way--aged about nine--and giving him the seat of honor, had a gorgeous time entertaining him. She had on a sport coat of blue and henna plaid and a smart straw sailor.

Mrs. Wallace Reid, whom her husband adequately described as the best looking thing around the track, entertained a box party, while her husband worked in the pits most of the day with the cameras,--getting stuff for his new automobile picture. With Mrs. Reid were Mr. and Mrs. Bill Desmond and Hank and Dixie Johnson.

Jack Pickford, who had been seriously ill for some days, was there too, looking white and thin, wrapped in coats and robes. His sister Lottie, in a magnificent coat of velvet and fur, and Teddy Sampson, in a sport frock of blue, were with him.

Mr. and Mrs. Cecil deMille were there of course.

Tom Mix and his wife, Victoria Ford, were among those present--Tom being very much in evidence with a plaid overcoat that must have been designed to match his bandanas. And Hoot Gibson had a bevy of pretty girls in a box next to May Allison's.

Doug Fairbanks arrived on the run when the races were about half over and watched them from the judge's stand, where Tony Moreno was having the time of his young life, rooting like a yell leader for de Palmer.

Mary Alden, with the smartest black had I've seen this year, entertained Mr. and Mrs. Rupert Hughes and some other friends.

Alice Lake wore a cape of wool with fringe and an adorable tam over her eye, and I saw Elliott Dexter, just back from a week at Catalina brown as a

berry, and pretty Seena Owen, in black and coral.

And everybody went home so hoarse from cheering, they couldn't speak.

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March 20, 1921

Frances Agnew

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

The motion picture event of the week was the local premier of Metro's greatest production to date, "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," staged at the Mission Theatre Wednesday evening. The opening was a gala social event, with seats for this special performance commanding a price of \$5, and even at that many were turned away. All the headliners in the film colony were there, with after-theatre parties as the order of the evening. William S. Smith, Gloria Swanson, George Melford, May Allison, Theodore Kosloff, Viola Dana, Alice Lake and Madame Nazimova were just a few of the favorites who gave special parties for the opening, followed by supper gatherings later.

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March 16, 1921

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

The audience at the opening of the Ambassador Theater last night represented the most brilliant angles of Los Angeles social life. Men and women of every profession, and of notable wealth, were observed throughout the house, and handsome gowns, brilliant jewels and magnificent furs gave the assemblage the aspect of the grand tier at the Metropolitan.

Among those who had reserved their seats in advance were ...Tom Moore, Mabel Normand, Wallace Reid, Louise Glaum, Carmel Myers, Tom Mix, Tully Marshall, Wallace MacDonald and Doris May, William Conklin, May Allison, Jack Coogan, Lila Lee, Harry Garson, Shirley Mason, Louis B. Mayer, Wanda Hawley, William Desmond, Earl Williams, Mildred Harris, Sam Woods, Jack Warner, Charles Murray, Mack Sennett, Elinor Glyn, James Kirkwood, Al Christie, Carter de Haven, John M. Stahl, Bessie Love, Joseph De Grasse, Gloria Swanson, Harold Lloyd, Phyllis Haver, Sol Wurtzel, Charles Chaplin, Allan Dwan, Betty Compson, Al Kauffman, Hal Roach, Irving Thalberg, Katherine

MacDonald, Benjamin B. Hampton, King Vidor, Naomi Childress, Anita Stewart, Mary Miles Minter and Virginia Fox.

Carl Stockdale and party, Mrs. Shelby in décolleté black net and jet, Maurice Tourneur and party, Bebe Daniels....

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April 6, 1921
Cholly Angeleno
LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Another brilliant event marked the second evening of the grand opera. All the gayety and the beauty of the opening night was repeated last evening in the personnel of the audience, the dazzling beauty of the gowns and the women who wore them.

Many who attended "Othello" were present again last evening to hear Mary Garden sing her famous Carmen role.

...Antonio Moreno and Rudolpho Valentino were among the screen stars present.

...Mary Miles Minter wore a gown of silver cloth and lace and a silver bandeau in her hair.

...Miss Mabel Normand was attractive in a gown of white satin, made without any suggestion of color, and an ermine wrap.

...Eva Novak, who was with William S. Hart, was in black lace with an exquisite coat of black heavily embroidered in gold.

* * * * *

April 10, 1921
Herbert Howe
NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

By far the most magnificent affair in which the film colony has ever participated was the pageant ball presented on the Monday following Easter in the great ballroom of the Hotel Ambassador as a benefit for the Children's Hospital of Los Angeles. The carnival of many splendors netted \$15,000 for the fund, largely through the co-operation of the celebrities of filmdom.

The pageant consisted of a series of tableaux, dazzling in color and

richness, based on historical episodes. The entire room was in darkness when a trumpet blared and a gigantic searchlight swept down the flowered aisle of the long salon, ushering in Queen Elizabeth before whom Shakespeare was to plead his case. This English number was presented by Mrs. H. D. Sheperd under the stage direction of William Parke.

Shakespeare in the person of Wedgewood Nowell made his case by introducing his favorite characters. Kathlyn Williams as Rosalind, and Mary Miles Minter as Juliet brought an ovation. But the real thrill came when the velvet curtains parted and the spotlight discovered Betty Blythe as Cleopatra clad in all her glory--and a few brilliant trifles. A gasp, followed by volleys of applause, went up as Cleopatra moved with stately grace before the queen and took from Charmian the regicidal asp which she crushed against her bosom. Miss Blythe was attired in a rich, yet effectively simple, robe which she wears as Queen of Sheba in the Fox extravaganza soon to be unfurled in New York.

The English group was followed by the Russian, presented by Mrs. Cecil B. De Mille and other women prominent in film society circles. Marguerite de la Motte as the fire bird in crimson and gold held breathless attention as she danced through the room. Lila Lee and Lois Wilson also contributed beauty and grace to this number.

The Indian-Persian portrayal of "The Marriage of Seven Steps" was presented by artists of the Brunton studios. The Indian procession was a flow of riotous color, Indian music, and furious dancing.

Gloria Swanson appeared as the moon goddess in the Chinese pantomime. In the throng surrounding her were Milton Sills, Lionel Belmore, Mr. and Mrs. Rupert Hughes, Mr. and Mrs. Rob Wagner and others of film fame.

Priscilla Dean appeared as queen of the carnival in the Italian piece. Margaret Loomis as the Spirit of the Adriatic led a ballet of sea-green nymphs. Mahlon Hamilton was the Doge of Venice. In the ensemble were Helen Jerome Eddy, Kara Schram, Ora Carew, Rosemary Theby, Tully Marshall and Clyde Cook.

A regime of French historical events was an elaborate series, the

tricolor and "la Marseillaise" bring the thousands of spectators to their feet. Irene Rich was Joan of Arc, Elinor Glyn impersonated the Empress Josephine, led by Tim Frawley as Napoleon; William Desmond was Francois Villon, Josephine Crowell gave realism to Catherine de Medici, Charles Kenyon, Richelieu; Winifred Kingston, Madame Pompadour. A graceful Watteau pastoral in minuet form was led by Mae Allison and Herbert Rawlinson, followed by Mary MacIvor and Conrad Nagel, Mary MacLaren and Mr. Hughes, Doris Pawn and Nigel Barrie. Other prominent leaders of the French tableau were Kathleen Clifford, Theodore Roberts, John Davidson, Sydney Franklin and Dana Todd. Not forgetting Master Jack Coogan, who, in the historic garb of The Kid, created a sensation greater than Napoleon or Foch and comparable to that of Cleopatra herself.

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September 1, 1921

Henry Dougherty

LOS ANGELES EXPRESS

The list of those who attended the initial showing of "The Three Musketeers" at the Mission theater reads like "Who's Who in Filmland."

Probably never before in the history of the film industry--with the possible exception of one or two D.W. Griffith productions--has there been such a brilliant assemblage in a Los Angeles theater for the purpose of witnessing a "first night" performance of a motion picture.

A score of stars whose faces are familiar to millions of people throughout the world, last night sat in on the performance, applauded generously, and when the end of the picture came they spoke as with one voice: "Marvelous. It is the greatest thing Douglas Fairbanks has ever done."

And speaking from a critical standpoint, one is justified in the assertion that "The Three Musketeers" is probably the greatest achievement since the birth of the motion picture industry...

Among some of the "first-nighters" were: Alla Nazimova, Katherine MacDonald, Roscoe Arbuckle, Clara Kimball Young, Mary Miles Minter, Bebe Daniels, Phyllis Haver, Mary MacLaren, Jesse L. Lasky, Eric von Stroheim,

Ferdinand Pinney Earle, May Allison, Kathleen Clifford, Elinor Glyn, Eileen Percy, William Conklin, Tod Browning, Colleen Moore, Betty Compson, Irvin Willat, Fred Niblo, Barbara La Marr, Marguerite de la Motte, Charles Ray, Ruth Roland, Ruth Stonehouse, L.E. Behymer, Max Linder, Wanda Hawley, Elliot Dexter and probably a score of others.

In addition, a majority of the best-known directors in Los Angeles were present.

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November 20, 1921

Frances Agnew

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Everybody who was invited--which meant almost everybody in the blue book of the Coast film colony--donned their best evening togs, ordered the chauffeur drove their own or rented an auto and plunged into the jam for the formal opening of Marcus Loew's new State Theatre here Saturday night. It was a big night for Mr. Loew and the film stars. The thousands of "fans" who kept the Los Angeles police busy while they stormed the theater and lined up on the streets to see the celebrities arrive and depart will bear witness to this fact.

This new State Theatre is the principal part of an imposing new office building on the corner of Seventh Street and Broadway. The Theatre is a beautiful one, equipped with all the luxury and convenience of the modern playhouse.

In one of the boxes sat Governor Stephens and his party and in the other Mayor Cryer with a group of his friends. Both executives spoke while arc lights played on their faces and the cameras recorded them in action, both lauding Mr. Loew for his achievement and proving good press agents for him by urging interest in this new theatre. Mr. Loew himself made a brief speech, after being introduced by Bert Lytell, while the ever-dependable and always entertaining master of ceremonies, Fred Niblo, again did the honors for the clever showman.

The few who paid money for the opening performance undoubtedly got their

money's worth, though we have no doubt that they shared the wish of the invited guests that the regular vaudeville program had been eliminated, leaving the field to the notable speechmakers and to the stars who appeared and performed.

The booking wheel unfortunately brought six very mediocre acts to the house for the week and the orchestra was in a much too serious mood when they selected the opening performance numbers. So we have no doubt that no one ever appreciated the magnetism of the cinema spotlight and the versatility of some of the stars better than did Mr. Loew that night when they put the "punch" into his opening show along about midnight. In fact, they gave it such a "punch" that there was no time left for the best feature of the regular program provided for the week, the Bert Lytell picture, "A Trip to Paradise."

Buster Keaton was the headliner of the evening with his eccentric dance, labeled "The Death of Salome," with a travesty on "The Great Moment," and due apologies to Elinor Glyn, finishing it. Ruth Roland pleased with two songs, one yodled. And other who acted out were T. Roy Barnes, Walter Hires, Robert Edson and Snitz Edwards, who put on a highly amusing ventriloquist act; Ora Carew, Buck Jones, Larry Semon and Al St. John.

In the stellar rows were Anita Stewart, Rudolph Cameron, Enid Bennett, May Allison, Robert Ellis, Bert Lytell, Bayard Vellier, Viola Dana, Alice Lake, Rex Ingram, Alice Terry, Gareth Hughes, Rudolph Valentino, Doris May, Irene Rich, Bebe Daniels, Wanda Hawley, Constance Binney, Nazimova, Jackie Coogan, Gloria Swanson, Dustin Farnum, Thomas H. Ince, Sid Grauman, Constance Talmadge, Natalie Talmadge Keaton, Sylvia Breamer, Madge Bellamy, Leah Baird, King Vidor, John Bowers, Ethel Clayton, Betty Compson, June Mathis, James Young, Antonio Moreno, William Duncan, Jack Gilbert, May Collins, Mary Thurman, Mabel Normand, Harold Lloyd, Mr. and Mrs. Carter de Haven and so on and so on through a longer list than we could ever remember at one sitting.

It is doubtful if any event here ever drew out more celebrities than did Mr. Lowe's opening. Certainly his theatre has had an auspicious and history-making beginning. Here's to its success!

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December 12, 1921

Frances Agnew

NEW YORK TELEGRAPH

Crowds of admiring fans and clicking cameras who recorded the arrival and departure of the silver sheet luminaries shared the street and lobby space in front of the Mission Theatre, Wednesday evening. The cause was the formal opening of Mack Sennett's best production, "Molly-O," with the irresistible Mabel Normand as Molly.

It was an invitation affair, the house being crowded with as many of the friends and acquaintances of the star and producer as it would hold, and hosts of them disappointed in not being present. And what an ovation they gave to Mabel, who, looking as lovely as always, sat in a loge between Charlie Chaplin and Abraham Lehr, two of her guests for the occasion. Even the scores of floral tributes banked on the stage and featured in the opening spotlight came in for special applause, further testimony of the popularity and appeal of the delightful star.

Fred Niblo, master of ceremonies deluxe, appeared in his customary opening night role and christened "Molly-O" with a humorous and, of course, dry toast to its success. Here's hoping Mr. Sennett will give us another "Molly-O" very soon, if for no other reason than to let us again appreciate the delightful art and beauty of Mabel Normand.

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December 15, 1921

Lee Ettelson

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

The Examiner Christmas Benefit all-star performance last night was a huge success, a great event. No actors benefit ever had a more magnificent array of talent, no throng of people, such as bulged Philharmonic Auditorium last night, was ever so satisfied.

Nothing was missing, from Fred Niblo, who was chairman, toastmaster and master of ceremonies, to the Fox Sunshine Comedy Four who closed the program

with a mystic something in gyrations called, "The Whirl of Mirth."

To mention the names of stars who took part in what, in recollection, becomes a huge spectacle, would be to give a stage a motion picture directory. Few stars of note were absent last night; and those who were not there were ill or out of the city, mostly.

...[Here follows a description of the various acts in the show] And then-
-what all waited for:

This was the 1921 Book of Fame, a famous book indeed, some nine feet high, gilded entrancingly, whose pages as they successively opened revealed the stars of the movie heavens, those who had won such a prominent place during the past year, personal appearances of names that thrill in any studio and household.

And as the book's pages were opened, the volume spoke"

May Allison, Agnes Ayres and Wesley Barry. Madge Bellamy, Lionel Belmore and John Bowers, Sylvia Breamer, May Collins, Jackie Coogan, Viola Dana, Mildred Davis, Marguerite de la Motte and Richard Dix. William Duncan, King Evers, Dustin Farnum, Helen Ferguson, Virginia Fox and Raymond Hatton. Jack Holt, Edith Johnson, Dorothy June and Alice Lake.

The book still turned back its pages, revealing Cullen Landis, Lila Lee, Bessie Love, Doris May, May McAvoy and Douglas MacLean; Frank Mayo, Mary Miles Minter, Baby Peggy Montgomery, Colleen Moore and Carmel Myers, Kathleen Myers, Mabel Normand, Dorothy Phillips, Pauline Starke and Anita Stewart, "Sunshine Sammy," Florence Vidor, George Walsh, Bryant Washburn, Lois Wilson and Claire Windsor.

A heaven of stars...

* * * * *

January 8, 1922

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

Unattended by directors shouting "action" and in an atmosphere that was utterly lacking in suggestion of the sets of a studio, Lottie Pickford Rupp, sister to Mary Pickford, was married last night to Alan Forrest Fisher, known to the cinema world in which he is a star as Alan Forrest.

The ceremony was performed in the First Methodist Church of Hollywood by the Rev. Dr. Willsie Martin, its pastor, and in the presence of nearly every motion picture star on the Pacific Coast, to say nothing of several hundred residents of Hollywood and Los Angeles.

Following the wedding, the bridal party, accompanied by a few intimate friends, went to the Ambassador Hotel, where a wedding dinner was served. This morning Mr. and Mrs. Fisher will leave on an extended honeymoon jaunt.

Where are they going?

They refuse to tell.

The wedding ceremony was marked by its beautiful simplicity and lasted less than ten minutes. Long before it began, though, the guests, both those of the motion picture colony who knew the couple well and those who have met them through the "silver screen," had gathered outside the church.

The doors were not opened until a few minutes before seven-thirty, the hour set for the marriage. When the guests were finally admitted the large edifice was filled within a few seconds and so large was the crowd that failed to gain admittance that a detail of police officers from the Hollywood station was pressed into service to handle it.

Arrangements had been made for the bride and groom to enter the church from different vestibules, but when 7:30 came and it was time to start the wedding march, "Mary and Doug" had not arrived and there was a short delay. Miss Rupp arrived early with her mother, Mrs. Charlotte Pickford, and her brother, Jack, who was to give her away.

When "Doug" and "Mary" arrived there was a hurried whispered conference of all the party and "Doug" was sent into the church to take his seat with the other members of the family.

"Doug's" appearance was the signal for an enthusiastic outburst of applause from the ensembled guests. It was enthusiasm that could not be kept down apparently, though the edifice was a church and the occasion a wedding. The object of the outburst, however, appeared none too well pleased and attempted to gain silence by nodding his head. It had no effect.

Many times have the members of last night's wedding participated in

beautiful wedding ceremonies before the camera, but last night, face to face with reality, they appeared lost, and they frankly admitted they felt that way.

Miss Rupp was attended only by her sister. There was no bridesmaid and no ring bearer or flower girls.

Just as the wedding march commenced, when Miss Rupp and her sister and brother were waiting in the vestibule to start the processional, "Our Mary" pleadingly asked what she was to do.

"I'm nervous," she said, and she meant it.

"I'm nervous too," responded Jack. "Don't ask me."

"Well, let's go in," added the bride.

There was a hurried scamper and Mary took a position before the other two. No one was quite sure which arm Jack was supposed to offer the bride but with the aid of a reporter they finally were straightened out and started into the church.

Mary, forgetting her nervousness, head in the air and looking straight ahead like a little grenadier, led the bride and her brother up the side aisle and down the center of the chancel.

Both the bride and her maid-of-honor were beautifully gowned and both deserved the subdued exclamation of homage that came from the standing guests. The bride has always had an honest claim to be called pretty. As for Mary--well, who is there in the world who doesn't know of her almost childlike beauty, and she never looked prettier than last night.

The bridgroom and his best man, Eddie Sutherland, were waiting near the foot of the chancel and as the bride and groom met, Doctor Martin entered from the chancel door. Almost, it seemed, before the audience realized the ceremony had begun, it had finished and the recessional began.

There was a mad rush on the part of the guests to reach the street before Mr. and Mrs. Forrest were driven away. Only a few, however, succeeded in getting near them. The ushers, Hoot Gibson, Al Roscoe and Harry Cohn, anticipating just such a move, saw to it that bride and groom were well on the way to the Ambassador before the church was half emptied.

Other members of the family made their exit from side doors and they too were whirled away from the huge and curious crowd. "Doug" may have held up the wedding by being just a little bit late but he managed to get to the hotel before the rest of the party and was in possession when they arrived.

Among the guests at the wedding dinner were Mr. and Mrs. Tom Moore, Thomas Dixon, Steve Franklin, Hoot Gibson, Harry Cohn, Al Roscoe, May McAvoy, Mabel Normand, Mr. and Mrs. Urson, Lila Lee, Mrs. Charlotte Pickford, Mary Miles Minter, Bebe Daniels, Alice Lake, Mr. and Mrs. Canfield, Eddie Sutherland, Mr. and Mrs. Scott, Jack Pickford, and "Doug and Mary."

Wallace Smith: February 15, 1922

The following is another of Wallace Smith's sensationalizing dispatches on the Taylor case.

February 15, 1922

Wallace Smith

CHICAGO AMERICAN

William Desmond Taylor was playing his last love scene, his final "fade-out" locked in the embrace of one of screenland's favored beauties, when the slayer's shot in the back ended his eccentric life.

This spectacular theory of the weird murder, reinforced by the latest developments in the sensational case, was played before the district attorney today following the report that, within a week, the actress and her newest mate would be arrested and charged with the crime.

It was reported, too, that an assistant district attorney had questioned Mack Sennett, producer, who for years has been an intimate friend of Miss Normand. The result of this alleged interview, of course, was not disclosed. Sennett, according to his assistants, has been ill for some days and unable

to be interviewed by newspaper reporters.

District Attorney Thomas Lee Woolwine, scanning the latest reports of his operatives, declined to comment on the "kiss of death" theory. From a semiofficial source--the only sort available in these parts, it was learned however, that recent discoveries led more and more to the trail of the actress and her paramour.

The arrests, it was declared, would loose a mighty volcano of scandal that would bury Hollywood in its burning ashes and arouse the entire nation.

The actress, it was known, had quarreled violently with Taylor about six weeks ago. The reason for their quarrel had never been divulged. His friendship for many other women, revealed since his tragic death, now seems to supply a motive. [5]

There had been a reconciliation and, a few days before the killing, another bitter quarrel. It was their "last quarrel," both declared. It proved so in fact.

The authorities considered today two angles of the new theory. One was that she and the man she had persuaded to become executioner for her had betrayed Taylor to his death. The other was that, visiting Taylor to renew their "friendship," she had been forced to witness the slaying of her lover by a jealous suitor and since has feared to tell her story.

Very careful of their reputations are these queens of the movies.

The actress' known fondness for morphine, the police declared, might be a salient fact to back up the new theory. Such a crime, they declare, might easily be directed by the fevered imagination of a "hopped-up"--that is, drug-inspired, lady.

When Taylor's body first was found the chivalrous authorities refused to consider that a woman was involved in the crime.

They are the same authorities who for two hours reported that Taylor had "died of natural causes."

They insisted that the position of the wound proved positively that Taylor had been seated at his desk with his arms lifted as if he had been on the point of writing when the shot was fired. Now they are able to see that

Taylor's arms might have been raised to clasp the woman's body.

The very position of Taylor's body as it was found, neatly "laid out," and the orderly condition of the room, assumed a new significance. At the time it was taken as a sure indication that there had been no struggle.

Now they are beginning to realize that, except perhaps in the movies, a murderer does not jauntily enter the door, fire a shot, and retire while his victim carefully adjusts his arms and legs as an undertaker might.

It is now believed that the slayer, before he left Taylor's study, straightened up the room, removed such clues as might attract the eye of the Los Angeles police and "laid out" Taylor's body. It was even suggested that the woman may have helped in thus covering the trail.

"She may have been very fond of him," remarked one of the detectives, with a serious face, "and so tried to leave his body as neat as possible. Also the room. You know how women are."

Seeming to support the theory that a woman was present when Taylor was slain is the tale told by a confessed--nay, a boasted--"bootlegger" picturing a woman fleeing from the Taylor home at about the time of the crime, as it was reckoned more or less arbitrarily by the police.

"I was delivering some very fine bonded stuff to Taylor," said the rum renegade. "I had delivered there many times before. This consignment was in half-pint bottles and I was carrying it in a case. I drove up in my car and started for the house to see if everything was all right.

"As I did, I heard what I thought was a shot. Of course I stopped in my tracks. In my business a man can't be too careful. I waited there for a few seconds in the shadow. Then I saw a woman come out in a hurry. She ran down the sidewalk and disappeared.

"Well, I was minding my own business and I got out of there in my car in a hurry, you can bet."

The sight of a woman fleeing the Taylor place a few seconds after the shot was heard might lead to the theory that the woman had done the crime. But the police, reluctantly admitting that a woman was in the affair at all, clung stubbornly to the contention that the weapon was too heavy a caliber

and make to be handled by feminine hands.

Nor would they pay any attention to the suggestion that every studio is cluttered with property weapons of all descriptions and every moving picture actress familiar with their use.

With the new clues and the new theories to direct the investigators, there was some interest displayed in the total of \$4,500 reward offered by various concerns for the arrest and conviction of Taylor's slayer. Of this, \$2,500 was offered by the moving picture firm for whom Taylor labored. \$1,000 by a local newspaper, and \$1,000 by the Screen Writers' Guild.

Some of the interest was in the amount offered as compared to the cost of the productions Taylor directed and the money they made.

One unique explanation of the reward was that the story expected to be told by the ultimate informant would be a very brief one. Actually, the formal statement reads:

"The Famous Players-Lasky Corporation hereby offers and agrees to pay the sum of \$2,500 reward to the person or persons furnishing information to the district attorney of Los Angeles resulting in the arrest and conviction of the slayer of William Desmond Taylor; that is to say, in the event such information is furnished by more than one person, such reward to be divided equally among such persons, the total reward not to exceed \$2,500."

Chief of Detectives David Adams bitterly denied the rumor that his men were inclined to "give up" the riddle of Taylor's death. He pounded his fist against the top of his desk to emphasize his declaration of unrelenting toil until the mystery is solved.

"We'll never rest until the murderer is behind the bars," he exclaimed. "There will be no let up in the search, even if it takes months."

Generally, the impression strengthened by the reports of semiofficial agents has been that District Attorney Woolwine's office is in possession of facts which will clear up the slaying within a few days or at the most a few weeks.

The district attorney himself blandly denied this. During an interview today he turned the talk to a discussion of his acquaintance with the man who

was killed.

"He was such a fine fellow," he declared, " that it is almost impossible to imagine a motive for the crime. He had a most attractive personality. He was the sort of man who, if you saw him in a crowd, you would instinctively wish to know more about, and you would manage to gravitate toward that part of room in which he was."

He was asked if the report that certain detectives supposed to be working on the case had been reported off duty.

"Well, those men are tired," declared the district attorney. "They've been working hard. They have only so many days off a month and if they don't take them when they're due they won't get them at all."

The only definite information divulged by the prosecutor was a denial that Mabel Normand's "blessed baby" letters had been returned to her. The screen favorite had made a statement in which she declared that the much discussed and very much protected letters had been returned.

Because of the fact that the letters were still locked in the prosecutor's safe it was reported that Miss Normand was to be questioned again to supplement the statement she made in her midnight interview at Woolwine's hands last Saturday.

Another theory which was considered by the authorities was that Taylor was killed by blackmailers who sought to involve his name with that of a young motion picture actress. Taylor, according to this theory, made a desperate battle for the reputation of an innocent girl.

It developed, however, that the young woman in question was not as innocent as her pictures would have a trusting public believe. On the contrary, according to semiofficial information about new letters discovered among Taylor's effects.

The district attorney announced he would again question William Davis, Miss Normand's chauffeur, who drove her to the Taylor home the night of the slaying. It was stated that fresh information had led Mr. Woolwine to the resolution to have the driver go over again his statement corroborating Miss Normand's version of the events of that night.

NEXT ISSUE: The Last Day of Taylor's Life
 Wallace Smith: February 16, 1922
 Has Mabel Normand Solved the Taylor Murder?

NOTES:

[1] In reality, Mabel was driven to the Arbuckles by actress Fay Tincher. See "Fatty's First" by Stuart Oderman and Minta Durfee in CLASSIC IMAGES #70, p. 42.

[2] See WDT:DOSSIER, p. 330.

[3] LOS ANGELES TIMES (May 7, 1937).

[4] See LOS ANGELES TIMES (February 4, 1922 and March 5, 1922).

[5] The quarrel "about six weeks ago" was obviously a reference to the New Year's Eve quarrel between Taylor and Mabel Normand.

Back issues of Taylorology are available on the Web at any of the following:

<http://www.angelfire.com/az/Taylorology/>

<http://www.etext.org/Zines/ASCII/Taylorology/>

<http://www.uno.edu/~drif/arbuckle/Taylorology/>

Full text searches of back issues can be done at <http://www.etext.org/Zines/>

For more information about Taylor, see

WILLIAM DESMOND TAYLOR: A DOSSIER (Scarecrow Press, 1991)
